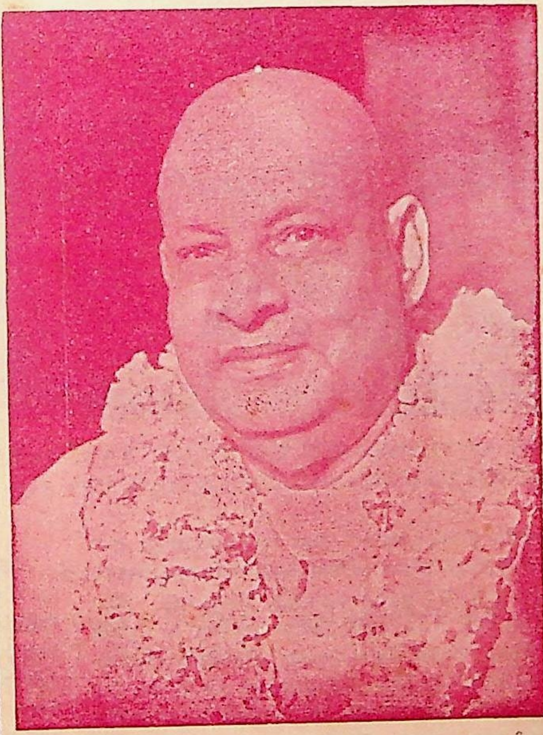
MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

THE DIVINE LIFE

VOL. XXXIV
NO. 10

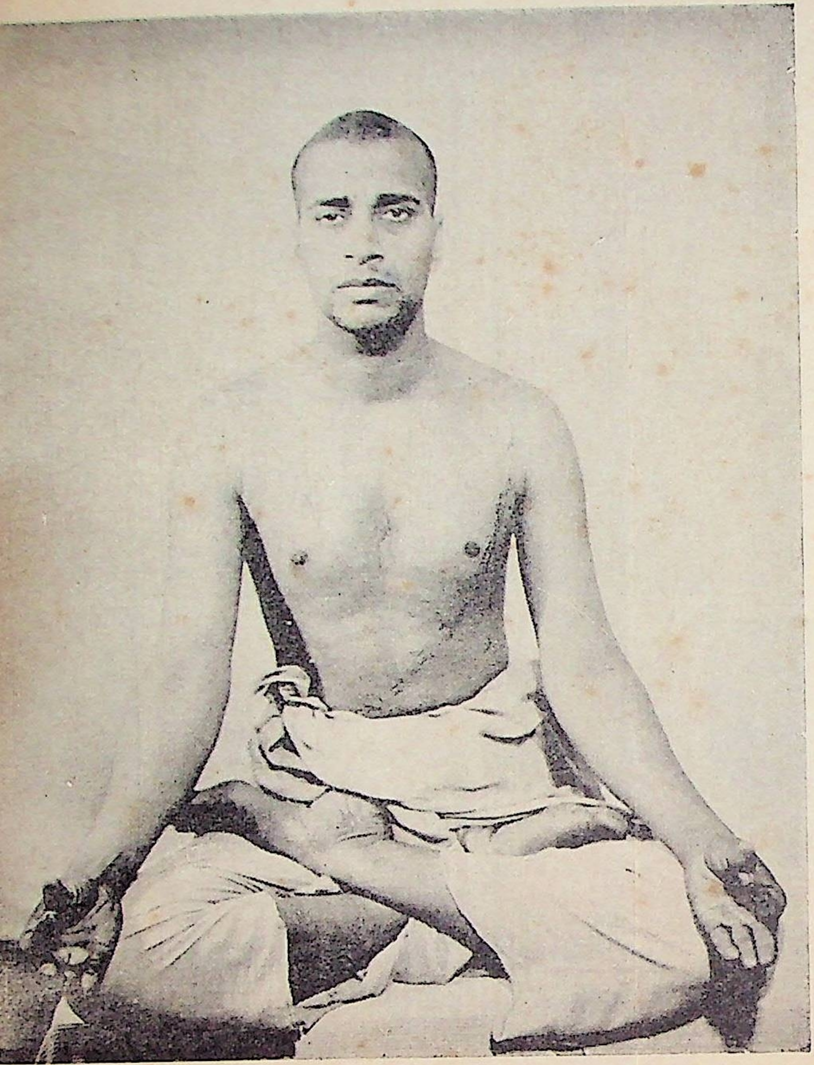
OCTOBER 1972



Do not argue about matters that are transcendental. Have faith. Faith can work wonders. Faith can take you to a realm where reason cannot enter. You will soon attain God-realisation.

—*Swami Sivananda.*

IN MEMORIAM



OUR SENIOR GURUBHAI H.H. SRI SWAMI NARAYANANANDAJI MAHARAJ: Born 16th Sept., 1915; Samadhi 17th Sept., 1972.

It is with great regret that we announce the sudden passing of our revered and beloved Gurubhai Sri Swami Narayananandaji Maharaj. The revered Swamiji who had been having a heart condition since about two years, attained Mahasamadhi on Sunday 17th September 1972, in the sacred city of Varanasi, where he had been residing for some years past. Swamiji appeared to have improved under medical treatment and seemed to have returned to normal health. The end came suddenly.

Sri Swami Narayananandaji Maharaj was a most illustrious disciple of Sri Gurudev. He was the repository of many noble virtues. He was very soul of simplicity. He was a monk of great renunciation, a deep spirit of *Vairagya* and exceptional *Virakti*. His devotion to his great Guru Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was unparalleled. Sri Gurudev's service was the very life and soul to Sri Swami Narayanji Maharaj. He lived only to serve Gurudev. He endeared himself very greatly to worshipful Gurudev by his total dedication to Gurudev's Mission, by his absolute selflessness, his purity of conduct, humility and self-effacement. He shone as a silent saint amongst our Monastic Brotherhood. Worshipful Guru Maharaj had very great affection for Sri Narayan Swamiji and looked after him with great care and solicitude, richly deserved by the latter's noble character and sterling spiritual quality.

Gurudev once declared, referring to Swami Narayanji, "He is simplicity itself. His is the scriptural ideal of a *Paramahamsa*. He never likes to wear costly dress. Renunciation of selfishness and egoism,—this is the secret of renunciation and this is the *Tyaga* that Sri Narayan Swamiji possesses. The world is in need of more such saints. Follow his footsteps and shine as beaconlight."

Swami Narayanji Maharaj was born at Trichur in Kerala on 16th September 1915. His highly religious parents, Sri K.N.V. Iyer and Smt. Locambal, named him Vaidyanathan. The deep austerity and piety of his father's life made an indelible impression on the boy, Vaidyanathan. Even in his childhood, he developed great faith in God and the habit of earnest prayer. He passed the Higher Secondary Examination in 1931 and successfully undertook an intense study of a commercial course

(Continued on cover iii)

SERVE LOVE MEDITATE REALISE
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

THE DIVINE LIFE

Vol. XXXIV | OCTOBER, 1972 | No. 10

ॐ

अर्धमात्रास्थिता नित्या यानुच्चार्या विशेषतः ।
त्वमेव संध्या सावित्री त्वं देवि जननी परा ॥

Ardhamatrasthita nitya yanuccharya viseshatah;
Tvameva sandhya savitri tvam devi janani para.

Thou art the eternal, indistinct, inarticulate, supersonic mora (known as *Ardhamatra*) in the transcendent form (of OM). O Devi, Thou art *Sandhya, Savitri;* Thou Supreme Generatrix (of all things).

—*Devimahatmya*: I.74.

The Significance of Devi Worship*

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda)

It is important for all to know and rightly understand the real spirit and significance of Devi worship so that tangible spiritual and material benefit of a lasting character may be derived by everyone to a maximum extent.

Rightly understood, the method of this worship shows you the true way to lead the divine life. It teaches you to live in such a way as to make your life a real and practical worship and adoration of the Divine Mother. It reveals the secret of rising from darkness, untruth and mortality unto the grand realm of light, truth and everlasting life.

Devi worship or Durga Puja is the adoration of the Divine Mother of all things, who bears the seed of the Universe in her imperishable womb, the Mahat-Brahma. Devi is the consciousness-power or the Chaitanyashakti, the glory of the supreme Sovereign of the universe made manifest to the manifested Jivas in the world of creation. As the creator, the preserver and the destroyer of the universe are but one God appearing in three forms, so the power which is inseparable from God appears in its threefold aspect. Even as a person here is known from his characters and powers, God is revealed in his Shakti which is the sum total of all knowledge, will and action, visible and felt as well as invisible and beyond comprehension. The whole universe is the manifestation of the richness and the glory of its immortal creator who hails beyond the dust of the earth and the luminaries of heaven. He, the Divine Master, works everywhere with his twofold Shakti, viz., Vidya and Avidya.

In the nine-day worship of the Divine Mother or Navaratri Puja, is illustrated the process of the overcoming of the dark and blind powers of the lower nature by the splendid and intelligent powers of the higher nature. The great war between Devas and Asuras marks the life of both the objective and the subjective sides of the created universe. Vidyashakti always gains an upper hand and everywhere there is a transcendence of the limitations and imperfections characteristic of Jivahood and Asurahood by the divine Jnanashakti which pierces through every quarter and cranny in its works of vanquishing unconsciousness or ignorance together with its train of effects, desire and selfish action. In the Devi Mahatmya or the Saptashati, Devi is described as the mass of the effulgent energy of the gods, headed by Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. This Shakti is released when the Devas begin to complain to these higher powers. The snese-energies presided over by intelligence, which are symbolised by the Devas together with their ruler Indra, when they are oppressed by the demoniacal forces of passion, anger, greed, malice, etc., of a destructive nature, begin to feel acutely their humiliation in the forms of the pains of life and resort to the highest Nature for help. At once, the Divine principle within reveals itself in its tremendous dignity of the power of consciousness and in its unifying absoluteness of truth and puts an end to the tempestuous life of animalism and all that is undivine or that which belongs to the realm of Avidya.

The three aspects of the Devi Puja are goodness, prosperity and knowledge. Goodness reveals the Truth; prosperity ushers in happiness; and knowledge precedes the dawn of intuition and leads you to the goal of Sat-Chit-Ananda. To strive to bring about these three above-mentioned factors into the life of mankind constitutes the real invocation and adoration of the Divine Mother who is manifest in every form of humanity.

---

*This year the sacred Navaratri will be celebrated from 8th to 17th of October.

Ritualistic or ceremonial worship is no doubt good, but it is the living worship that truly transforms and spiritualises you more quickly and leads you on to the highest realisation. To consecrate the Divine Mother in the holy altar of your heart, to manifest Her divine power within and to live to serve and do good to all is the best and the dynamic way to adore and worship the Divine Mother, Durga.

To invoke the Goddess Lakshmi, you have to try ceaselessly to bring prosperity into the lives of all. Its significance is that one should be large-hearted and generous, charitable and kind. The aspirant will have to strive hard to remove the pain and sorrow and bring happiness to all as per his capacity. Those who are monetarily gifted, to them I would ask to open free dispensaries for the poor patients and feeding centres for the destitutes, to educate the illiterate and to aid and encourage through every means the increase of the wealth of the country, for where prosperity and happiness prevail, there alone Goddess Lakshmi is more easily propitiated.

Now, to manifest the Goddess Sarasvati you have to educate yourself first. You have to become a flood of light, and thereby you should radiate the Divine Knowledge to everyone. Such sincere aspirants can go to the slums and backward, illiterate localities and give free lessons on secular and spiritual matters as well. You can thus offer the grandest and worthiest form of worship to Devi Sarasvati.

O seekers of perfection in Truth! Even as you reach a destination only along a path leading to it and intimately related to it, the realisation of God is possible only through the several degrees of empirical reality which act as steps in the ladder of spiritual experience. The universe of the several planes of consciousness with their different values and grades of truth is the Shakti of God. In the Isavasya Upanishad you read that the worship of Asambhuti and Sambhuti leads to the gradual attainment of ultimate perfection. God cannot be conceived of as divorced from his Supreme power which appears as and governs this universe, even as you cannot have fire and heat distinguished. You know a substance through its quality. You realise God through his Shakti, who is Devi, Maha-Maya, Prakriti, the progenitress of all.

You can worship Devi either through Vaidika or Tantrika methods. She is worshipped even without rituals, through Para Puja or pure meditation alone. Indeed, this is the highest kind of worship, where the Divine Mother is considered as his or her own by the spiritual child. The grace of the Devi is the experience of the participation of the higher Nature by the devotee on account of his conformity to the laws of manifestation in its orders of divine Shaktis or the forms of the one Divine Power. No order of reality can be stepped into unless one fulfils the demands of the one lower to it. The Devi Upasaka, thus knowing that Devi is Parabrahma Shakti itself, not creating a barrier between God and His Shakti, even as one does not consider the sun and his luminosity as separate, reaches the state of Brahman through the grace of Devi. It means that in the Sadhana Marga, which an aspirant follows, he has to proceed from the earthly consciousness to the higher states step by step through the transcendence of the manifested orders of phenomenal experience, without unwisely thinking that he can jump over the extremely elevated terrace without climbing along the steps below.

In this way, Devi Puja has a great spiritual meaning. Therefore, worship the Mother of the Universe, the Shakti or Brahman in its Supreme Form, or in her manifested form according to your capacity. I need not stress over the obvious fact that you should strictly practise Ahimsa, Satya and Brahmacharya, if you are to realise Devi, the glorious Divine Power of the Supreme Reality. I stress upon the moral side and the ethical side of Sadhana, because you are likely to miss it and no valuable achievement is possible without it. Without it, high-flying idealisms will bring nothing; they will be a waste like oblations offered on ashes. Worship of God or Goddess, if it is to result in spiritual illumination, the observance of Yama and Niyama is absolutely necessary. These form the twofold equipment to overcome brute nature and hoist the banner of spiritual victory. Offer to goddess Durga the animal nature, the Pashu, of your inner evil traits of passion, anger and greed. Do not kill animals of the external world in the name of Balidana to the Goddess. She wants your animal-man within. No Himsa should be committed on the excuse that it is for the Devi. You have no right or justification to hurt any living creature for whatever reason. Ahimsa should be free from all exemptions whether pertaining to class, place, time or circumstance. Ahimsa is universal vow to be practised absolutely. No worship, no prayer, no act whatsoever in life can justify injury or harm done to living beings. Even self-protection cannot justify murder. You have to stick to the rule of universal love to the best of your ability, to the utmost extent possible. The offering of the self, the surrender of the ego to the Divinity is the supreme sacrifice. Nothing is superior to it. Nothing can be equal to it. This is the most exalted form of Divine worship. Worship the Almighty with Atma-bhava, with Sarvatmabhava. This is the greatest and the most glorious thing that can ever be done by any one at any time. May you all imbibe the knowledge of real worship of the Divine Being. May the Devi shower Her blessings upon you all!

During Navaratri, observe strict Anushthana and purify your inner nature. This is the most auspicious time in the year for Mother-worship. Read Saptashati or Devi-Mahatmya and Lalita-Sahasranama. Do Japa of the Mantra of Devi. Perform worship with purity, sincerity and devotion. The Divine Mother will bless you with the knowledge, the peace and the joy that know no end! May the Divine Devi, the Mother, bless you all!

Thirty-Second Edition!

LIGHT, POWER AND WISDOM

By

Swami Sivananda

A very useful pick-me-up for daily reading to all beginners in Yoga.

Pages 176 plus xx
Size: Demy 1|16
(Pocket Size)
Price: Rs. 2|-

THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY
THE SIVANANDA PUBLICATION LEAGUE
P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR, U.P., India.

The Path of Devotion

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

The coming into the company of seekers, who love the Lord, and who aspire for the attainment of Divine Consciousness, is in itself a tremendous experience. It is a process of vital renewal and a spiritually recharging and remaking process. In this process you once again revive your inner awareness of the Changeless behind these changing names and forms. You once again restore your relationship with That which is the very life of your life, the origin and source of your being, your invisible support and the goal ultimate of your existence. In this Satsanga you once again strive to reestablish in a vital way your inner spiritual link with the Divine. This is the purpose and the meaning of Satsanga. It is the drawing near to That which is the eternal, the immortal, the changeless, the ever-perfect, the whole behind this fragmentary and chaotic flux of momentary appearances of names and forms that are rising shadows, and re-establishing your spiritual link with the abiding Reality that is the innermost Self of your being.

Herein lies the unique value of Satsanga for it draws your consciousness away from passing unrealities into the basic Reality which is the substratum of that which is seen, that which is perceived and it is in this living contact, in this continued and unbroken connection, in this vital spiritual relationship that you have the assurance of true fulfilment in your life. Take away this inner relationship, this inner contact, and your life will soon run into a dryness. It will become arid and essenceless. There will come upon it darkness, great dejection and a sense of frustration, void and emptiness. Meaning will be taken out of the life of that individual who loses contact with the Reality, not the appearances that masquerade as Reality, but that Reality which is the very root of your being. It is the source of your very existence and, therefore, that contact is the vital factor that makes any meaning, significance, depth, a sense of fullness and a sense of real acumen in life.

Take the example of a tree. High above the ground there are fruits, flowers and leaves that are vital, alive, full of energy, dynamism and growth. What is the secret of this life there in the air? Hidden from sight, invisible and, therefore, for all practical purposes, non-existent as far as one's gross perception goes, there lies a certain source of living energy. Hidden under the depths of the earth is this source of life and sustenance which gives it power of growth. No matter how far above the ground these various parts of the tree, they have a hidden connection with that invisible source and that is the secret of their life. If you chop off a branch, lop off a little twig, separating them from the tree, immediately their leaves and flowers are dead and they dry up soon.

Similarly with your life, there is a hidden source, a hidden reservoir of all that is positive. When your life blossoms forth with the bliss that is beyond all sorrow into peace that transcends all turmoil and restlessness, into an illumined state of consciousness that is far above this little half knowledge, ignorance and error, you attain the source that gives you the dynamism to move towards this fulfilment of your life and it is variously called Self, Atman, etc. Call it what you will, it is something you cannot ignore. And you ignore it at the cost of your own happiness, peace, sense of fulfilment, success and, in short, of your own life.

A great saint summing up this great secret of the fact of life, said: "Remembrance of God is life and forgetfulness of God is death." The moment one separates oneself by losing contact with the Divine, stagnation begins to come into one's life. And life begins to weigh heavily and becomes a burden and is no longer a song of joy, a thing of beauty, an unfolding and outer progress. It becomes a burden filled with all the pains, sorrows and sufferings which are caused by this little "I" consciousness, the confined "I" consciousness cut off from its Source—the universal "I" Consciousness.

Develop a relationship, or become aware of your relationship (it is something that does not need to be developed in you but it needs to be heeded, not to be forgotten or neglected) with the Divine. Become aware that in your true nature you are ever linked with the Divine Source of your being and progressively make it grow until God becomes the dominating stuff of your consciousness. That is the great need. That is worship and that is the way to make this life truly whole, truly successful in attainment and to transcend the imperfections and defects of this fitful transitory earth-life.

All religion, all worship has as its objective this renewal, this restoration of the great fact of your being: "I am related a thousandfold more to the Divine than to the mundane. My relationship with the mundane is but for a fleeting moment. A little while ago I was not of this universe nor did I exist for this universe. I am here now but soon I have to pass on. A moment in time will come when my relationship with this external phenomenal set-up will cease. and once again I shall be back in that dimension from which I entered into this state of temporary contact with this external phenomenon".

How blind man is! He never sees the Reality. Maya is making the appearance of the apparent to assume the status of Reality and thus making man forget the Reality.

This process of developing and growing into a progressive state of intense, inner, spiritual relationship, the recognition of the fact that your relationship with the Divine is a fact and is a thousandfold more real and valid than your relationship with passing material phenomenal process, is the great thing that is needed if you really wish joy, fullness, peace, plenty, beauty, harmony and all health to come into your life. All the religions, faiths, and creeds, and all the saints have but come into this universe with this one great objective—to recall to man once again the great need to make this relationship into a dynamic and living fact in his life. This is the central purpose of religion and it is the central message of all saints and sages—whether of the east or the west, ancient or modern. The central theme of philosophy and the scriptures is to make the individual turn away for this kaleidoscope, this circus of the many, and move towards the abiding and the changeless one. One should not lose oneself in this dense jungle of earth-life (Samsara) but should move towards the inner shrine wherein dwells blessedness. This is the meaning of religion. All the processes of religion, all the practices of Yoga, and every technique ever devised by any Master or Guru or any adept have for their ultimate objective and purpose this re-establishment and the development into all its fullness your relationship with that One Being, the one Principle, the one Reality of which alone you can really and truly say: "It is mine, I belong to That".

About no other thing in this universe can you assert this Truth: "It is mine and

I belong to It"—not even with regard to this body which you think is so dear to you, so near to you and is your own self and with which you are in an absolute state of identification. Even the body will one day leave you in the lurch and depart and will say: "Oh, no, you have no authority over me. I am here under some other law, the law of Karma, and when that is over and done with, you cannot claim me as your own". Even when you consider the body your own, how much control have you over it? If only you take some wrong thing in your diet the bowels start purging. Can you then say: "No, you belong to me, stop, you should not purge"? It will not listen to you and you will have to run to the toilet ten times. You may have three Ph.D. degrees, or be president of India or of the United States, but you have very little control over the body. If you obey its natural functions and treat it properly, then it will go along with you, but if you contradict some law, then you will be taught how much control you have over it. So we have to realize that it is only with one Being, Truth, that we can assert: "Yes, Thou art mine and I am Thine", and that one Being Is.

God is your own. The Divine is your own. You belong eternally to the Divine and in the Divine you have your all-in-all. The great need, therefore, in life is to ever keep yourself closely related to that which does not perish, which does not pass away, which does not change, which can never disappoint you and which can never bring about disillusionment into your life. All association with the non-eternal is ultimately fraught with sorrow. This is the simple truth. Common-sense tells you, if you will reflect, that association with the non-eternal is ultimately fraught with sorrow and the Eternal alone can fulfil the longing of the innermost depths of your being. The Eternal alone can satisfy the spirit and you are spirit. You are not this physical body. You are not this ever-changing mind, neither the intellect nor the spurious little "I" personality. You are Spirit, and the Eternal alone can ultimately give satisfaction to your expression. In the Eternal alone can you find true joy, true fulfilment, true rest and a true sense of becoming completely whole. That is the great Thing to which one should remain close, which one should never forget and with which one should ever keep an intense relationship that is ever growing and ever dynamic.

How can you do it? You can do it with the faculties you possess. They are your working tools. If that Divine Principle were a tangible thing in the nature of an object to you, first you would make use of the physical body to grasp it, hold it and keep it. But it is supra-physical and invisible, at least in your present state of consciousness. Now your consciousness is outgoing oriented thought, objective perception only. So it is the world that is visible to you.

What is it that has brought you to this state of such confused involvement with this universal process, the world outside with the objects here? How is it that you are enmeshed in a variety of things and experiences from which you do not seem able to free yourself? It is your sentiments and your emotional involvements which have managed to bind you, and you are attached They have hooked you with your affections and your likes.

The individual's nature, which is made up of the emotional potential and of the man's personality, is very much in evidence here. It is very much the reason, the causative factor or the propelling force in this present involvement out of which there is much bondage, slavery and losing of oneself in the experience of things. So laying oneself open to the experience of all the impacts that evolve out of this involvement, man exposes himself to all the variety of experiences that result from this involvement, always the same in joy and sorrow, in suffering and anxiety, in fulfilment and disappointment. So you ever react, due to being exposed to the inevitable outcome of this involvement with the outer through your emotional potential, to that dimension of your being made up of the emotional content of your personality.

The Universal Prayer of Gurudev Swami Sivananda

(Swami Tejomayananda)

The Universal Prayer of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj is very popular among the devotees and admirers of Swamiji. It is a non-sectarian prayer suited to one and all. It contains the quintessence of the teachings of the scriptures as well as the method of spiritual Sadhana for God-realisation. Since it is in a condensed form, mostly we do not recognise its significance in our daily repetition and miss to get the real benefit out of it. If this single prayer is uttered with faith, devotion and understanding it can take us to the Goal itself. Such is the value of this Universal Prayer which is equally applicable to each and every human being, man or woman, young or old, from the East or West or North or South.

The Prayer reads as follows:

"O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Satchidananda.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed, anger and hatred.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever."

God is the Supreme Lord of this Universe. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer. He is the Commander, the Monitor, the Governor and He is the all in all. He is beyond the ken of the human intellect. But He is a living Reality. He is full of mercy and love towards all the living beings. Out of mercy and love only He has created the different Lokas with different objects of enjoyment to give the 'life-experience' to the Jivas and thus to teach them the lesson that even if one possesses all the fourteen Lokas one cannot get complete satisfaction and peace and still there will be the feeling of 'something wanting' and dissatisfaction. Thus He always silently teaches us that one can get eternal peace and everlasting satisfaction only in Him. Therefore it is said in the Sankhya and Yoga philosophies that *'Bhoga-apavargartham drisyam'*, that is, the purpose of existence of this seen phenomenal universe is to give enjoyment or fruit of one's past actions and to liberate him. There is no other purpose or meaning for the existence of this universe. One is expected to learn from this school of life that *'Parinama-tapa-samskara-duhkhair gunavritti-virodhachcha duhkhameva sarvam vivekinah'*—'to the man of discrimination all is painful on account of everyhing bringing pain either as consequence, r as anxiety of loss of happiness, or as resh craving arising from impressions and lso as counteraction of the three Gunas of he Prakriti'. Therefore this painful expe-ience is a blessing in disguise according to Sri Gurudev. Thus the Lord is an embodi-nent of compassion. He loves His children nore than a mother of the empirical world. Therefore He is adorable, worshipful. Salute Him. Adore Him. Prostrate before Him. This is nothing but surrendering one's ego t His feet. One should recognise that *Tvameva mata cha pita tvameva, tvameva andhuscha sakha tvameva; tvameva vidya ravinam tvameva, tvameva sarvam mama evadeva'*—'Thou alone art my mother. Thou lone art my father, relative and friend. Thou alone art my wisdom and wealth and Thou alone art everything'. One should old His Lotus Feet firmly as the sole refuge. Lord Sri Krishna also gives an assurance o this effect. He says: *'Sarvadharman pa-ityajya mamekam sharanam vraja; Aham tva sarvapapebhyo mokshayishyami ma shuchah'*—'abandoning all duties, take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not.' He also says: *Ananyaschintayanto mam ye janah paryupasate, Tesham nityabhiyuktanam yogakshemam vahamyaham'*—'To those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, to those ever-united, I secure that which is not already possessed (Yoga) and preserve what they already possess (*Kshema*).

What is the Svarupa or Essential Nature of this Lord? He is Sat-Chit-Ananda. He is of the nature of Absolute Existence, Absolute Consciousness and Absolute Bliss. Nothing less than that. What is 'Sat'? 'Sat' is that which never ceases to exist in all the three periods of time, the past, present and future. This is contrary to 'Asat' which has no existence at all. This is a recognised Truth. The Lord says in the Gita: *'Nasato vidyate bhavo nabhavo vidyate satah'*—'the unreal has no existence and there is no non-existence for the Real.' This Sat or Existence is conscious of its existence. It is self-revealing, self-luminous—Svatah-siddhah, Svayamjyotih. It is not shining by borrowing light from any other source. It is the source of all lights. *'Na tatra suryo bhati na chandratarakam, Nema vidyuto bhanti kutoyam agnih'*—the sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor stars, nor the lightning nor fire. All these lights get their light from this Light of lights. This is *'Jyotishamapi jyotih'*. This is the fountain-head of all lights. Therefore the Lord is Absolute Consciousness. Consciousness or Knowledge is Bliss. He is Anandaghana or a mass of Bliss also. Ananda is not different from Chit and Chit is not different from Sat. So, the Lord is Satchidananda in His essential nature.

How the Lord manifests Himself to the devotee? What are His other characteristics? He is Sarvavyapin or Omnipresent, Sarvasaktiman or Omnipotent and Sarvajna or Omniscient. He is all-pervading. The Lord Himself says in the Gita: *'Mattah parataram nanyat kinchidasti dhananjaya; Mayi sarvamidam protam sutre manigana iva'*—'There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me. O Arjuna! All this is strung on Me, as clusters of gems on a string'. Sadasiva Brahmendra in his famous Vedantic song sings in ecstasy *'Sarvam brahmamayam re re, Sarvam brahmamayam'*—'Lo! All is one mass of Brahman. Lo! All is one mass of Brahman'. Therefore, *'Sarvatra sada hamsadhyanam kartvyam bho muktinidhanam'*—'Lo! Everywhere and always, evermore, must one meditate on the Hamsa, the Supreme Reality, which assures liberation'. The Isavasya Upanishad says: *'Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kincha jagatyam* *jagat'*—'Whatever that is changeful in this ephemeral world, all that must be enveloped by the Lord'. The Narayana Sukta says: *'Antar bahischa tat sarvam vyapya narayanah sthitah'*—'Lord Narayana alone exists pervading inside and outside of everything'. Each and every atom of this universe is pervaded by the presence or existence of this Supreme Lord. 'It moves, It moves not; It is farther than the farthest. It is nearer than the nearest; It is within all this universe and It is also out of all this' is another way of putting it in the words of the Upanishad.

What a tremendous power the Lord must possess! The astronomical science says that a few stars alone are known which are hardly bigger than the earth, but most of them are so large that hundreds of thousands of earths could be packed inside each and also leave room to spare. Here and there we find an immense star large enough to contain millions and millions of earths. And the total number of stars in the universe is probably something like the total number of grains of sand on all the seashores of the world. Such is the vastness of the total substance of the universe. These millions of stars are wandering about in space. And they travel through a universe so immense that it is a very, very rare event indeed for one star to come anywhere near another. The scientists find the universe frightening because of its immense distances which they do not understand, frightening because of the stretches of time so great that they cannot imagine them, making the whole of human history so very small in comparison, frightening because of our extreme loneliness, and because of the littleness of our home in space—a millionth part of a grain of sand out of all the seasand in the world. But above all else, they find the universe frightening because they cannot find any sign that life like our own exists anywhere in it except on the earth. Such is the nature of this universe. Such a vast universe is called a Brahmanda and it is said that there are many such Brahmandas in space.

But all these Brahmandas are only a fraction of that Supreme Purusha. The Purusha-Sukta of the Rig-Veda says that *'Sa bhumim visvato vritva atyatishthaddasangulam....Padosya visva bhutani tripadasyamritam divi'*—'Pervading the entire world He stands above the mathematical calculations....This phenomenal universe along with its elements is nothing but a quarter of His Being and three quarters of Him are in the everlasting shining regions'. From this one can infer to a certain extent the vastness and the power of this Being. He is the Antaryamin, the indweller of all beings and at the same time transcending everything. Therefore He knows everything all at once simultaneously. He governs this universe with His powers of Omnipotence and Omniscience.

In the words of Sri Gurudev: 'God is the totality of all that exists, both animate and inanimate, sentient and insentient. He has no beginning, middle or end. He is all in all. The existence of things is by the light of God. God is ever living. All depend on Him. He is not depending on any. Behind all names and forms is the one nameless, formless Essence. Behind all governors is the one Supreme Governor of governors. Behind all lights is the one Light of lights. Behind all sounds, there is the soundless Supreme Silence. Behind all teachers is the one Supreme Guru of Gurus. There is nowhere where He is not. Just as one thread penetrates all the flowers in a garland, so also one Self penetrates all these living beings. He is hidden in all beings and forms, like oil in seed, butter in milk, mind in brain, Prana in the body, foetus in the womb, sun behind the clouds, fire in wood, vapour in the atmosphere, salt in water, scent in flowers, sound in the gramophone records, gold in the quartz, microbes in blood. God dwells in all beings as life and consciousness. God is the roar of a lion, the song of a bird, and the cry of a babe. Every breath that flows in the nose, every beat that throbs in the heart, every artery that pulsates in the body, every thought that arises in the mind, speaks to you that God is near. Every flower that wafts fragrance, every fruit that attracts you, every gentle breeze that blows, every river that smoothly flows, speaks of God and His mercy. The vast ocean with its powerful waves, the mighty Himalayas with its glaciers, the bright sun and stars in the wide sky, the lofty tree with its branches, the cool springs in the hills and dales, tell you of His omnipotence. The music of the sweet singers, the lectures of the powerful orators, the poems of the reputed poets, the inventions of the able scientists, the operations of the dexterous surgeons, the utterances of the holy saints, the thoughts of the Bhagavad Gita, the revelations of the Upanishads, speak of God and His Wisdom. Everything is God. God pervades the entire universe. He walks in the garb of a beggar. He moans in pain in the guise of the sick. He wanders in the forest clad in rags. Open your eyes. See Him in all. Serve all. Love all. Feel the Divine presence everywhere—in every form, every thought, in every feeling and in every sentiment, in every movement, in every motion. God seen through the senses is matter. God seen through the intellect, is mind. God seen through the spirit is Atman or the Self. Thou art indwelt by the Lord. He is the inner ruler, Antaryamin, guarding and controlling your life. He is in you and you are in Him. He is quite close to you. He is not very far, but is nearer to you than you are in yourself. You were thinking in the beginning that He could be found only in Mount Kailas, Rameswaram, Mecca, Jerusalem, sky, or heaven. You had very vague ideas. This body is His moving temple. The sanctum sanctorum is the chamber of your own heart. Close your eyes. Withdraw your Indriyas from the sensual objects. Search Him in thy heart with one-pointed mind, devotion and pure love. You will surely find Him there, you cannot find Him anywhere else".

The language of the tongue is not of much importance. One should know the language of the heart. It is through the language of the heart alone the saints and sages speak to all the sentient and even to the insentient beings. Therefore we have to pray to the Lord to grant us an understanding heart. If one can recognise the omnipresence of the Almighty Lord it is not difficult to develop equal vision, an impartial attitude. If the omnipotent nature of the Lord is understood properly one will completely surrender to the will of that power and there will be no room for the agitation of the mind. One gets balanced state of mind in pleasure and pain, praise and censure, heat and cold, etc. Faith, devotion and wisdom are the Prasad of the Lord, they are obtained by those whom He chooses. *('Yamevaisha vrinute tena labhyah')*.

'The Svayambhu (Creator) has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal. Only perchance some wise man desirous of immortality turns his eyes inward and beholds the inner Atman' —so says the Kathopanishad. The senses are always attracted by their respective sense-objects. It is their natural tendency because the Creator Himself has made them in such a way. Therefore when one seriously wants to know his essential nature he not only finds it very difficult to understand the Truth, but also he is tempted from all sides more and more. For instance, in the case of Nachiketas, when he asked Lord Yama to teach him the secret of the life beyond, the Lord of death refused to impart this knowledge to him. On the other hand he tempted him to choose, as an alternative, sons, grand-sons, herds of cattle, elephants, horses, gold, vast territory on earth, longest span of life, emperorship over the three worlds, fair damsels, chariots, musical instruments and whatever he wanted. But Nachiketas had the inner spiritual strength to resist all these temptations. He was adamant, and he achieved what he wanted to achieve.

It is not difficult to achieve supernatural powers like walking over fire or water, flying in the air, entering the body of another person, assuming the form like a mountain or atom, but it is extremely difficult to control the mind. Through the grace of the Lord one can achieve this Our mind is filled with all the base animalistic tendencies like egoism, lust, greed anger and hatred due to the continuous accumulation of them in the form of Samskaras during the innumerable past lives. The mind is to be cleansed of all these dross matters and it should be filled with divine virtues like love, compassion, charity, friendliness, contentment etc.

It should be the endeavour of each and every one to behold the presence of the Lord in all these names and forms gradually. Then one becomes established in God-consciousness in due course. Sankirtan, repetition of the Lord's Name, Satsanga etc., are aids in achieving this goal.

If all these points are kept in view while repeating the Universal Prayer and put into practice, surely one can abide in the Lord for ever and ever.

Yoga for Spiritual Progress*

(Sri Swami Manuvaryaji)

That from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge—that is the Supreme Reality.

The Spirit is self-luminous, self-creative, uncreated and ever present. It is beyond time, space and causality. There is no place where It is not; no time when It is not.

He is the ruler of the past and the future. He is ever present behind all the thought and activity of man, whether in the waking state or in the dream state.

The Upanishads declare that Self-knowledge—the Knowledge of the inmost reality in us—alone is spiritual knowledge. It is this knowledge which confers spiritual freedom on man. Isha Upanishad speaks of the divinity of man and nature and the spiritual oneness of all existence. Everything is Divine in essence. God is in the hearts of all beings. Man has to live and function in this world, seeing God everywhere, in everything and to spiritualise all activity.

Kathopanishad, giving an exposition of the nature of the Self or the ultimate Reality, points out the limitations of logical reason in understanding the deeper spiritual reality which is imbedded in the heart of every being.

These Upanishadic truths are the outpourings from the hearts of perfected souls who had the vision of Reality face to face. The teachings of the Upanishads are there for anyone to take up and live up to them. The Upanishads urge every individual, every earnest seeker, to march along and progress in the moral path, to scale the heights of spiritual Truth, to know the nature of Reality that is in the hearts of all beings, to get free from the bondage of matter and to attain spiritual illumination, which confers on man eternal peace, eternal happiness and eternal blessedness.

---

*Delivered at the All-India Seminar of Yoga, Ahmedabad, in August 1972.

What are the steps that lead to this state of Bliss? Is there a path of attaining the knowledge of Reality? Yes, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and the eightfold Yoga of Patanjali. Maharshis and Saints have shown various paths at different times, all over the world. 'The Truth is one, the wise speak of It variously'.

All Yoga is in its nature a new birth out of the ordinary mental and material life of man into a higher spiritual consciousness and a greater divine being. The process of Yoga is a turning of the human soul from the egoistic state of consciousness absorbed in the outward appearances and attractions of things to a higher state in which the Transcendent and the Universal can pour itself into the individual mould and transform it. The mental energies and emotions, the vital desires and the very physical being have to be compelled into the right attitude or trained to admit and answer to the right influences. The inner Guide, the Jagadguru Sri Krishna, seated within us. destroys our darkness by the light of His knowledge. He discloses in us, progressively His own nature of freedom, bliss, love, power, immortal being. By the inpouring of His own influence and presence into us He enables the individual beings to attain, to identify with the Universal and Transcendent.

The secret of success in Yoga is to regard it not as one of the aims to be pursued in life, but as the whole life. Our whole being—soul, mind, senses, heart, will, life and body—must consecrate all its energies so entirely and in such a way that it shall become a fit vehicle for the Divine. Thus, our limited outward-looking ego is to be exiled and God enthroned in its place as the ruling inhabitant. Live in God and not in the ego. Act in God and not in the ego.

The goal of life is Self-realisation. All systems of Indian philosophy have one goal in view, the liberation of the soul through perfection. The word Yoga means union between Jivatman and Paramatman, or individual soul and Supreme Soul. We come across the term in the Vedas and Upanishads. Vedanta and Yoga go together. Vedanta supplies a conception of Reality and Yoga is actual practice to reach that Reality. Practice is the essence of spiritual life. Yoga is more than an intellectual conception of Truth; it is perception (Darshan) of Truth.

Let us try to understand clearly what the great seers, teachers and Rishis of the past have taught us. One must practise and reflect as well as study the concepts of Yoga scattered in the philosophical literature and become familiar with the spiritual discoveries of our own time.

There is a general misconception that Yoga is based on Patanjali's book. But this is not true. Patanjali was not the founder of Yoga but its important systematiser. His view is dualistic and he advocates an ascetic attitude. For a broader and more positive expression of Yoga, we must go to the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita.

People often make sweeping generalisations like 'the West is materialistic and the East is aesthetic and spiritual'. Truth is not so simple. There are obvious distinctions between races and nations, between cultures and civilisations. But these differences are not fundamental. We are all the manifestations of one life. There is a universal march of life towards light and freedom. To-day's civilisation is the creation of the people of the world.

Wherein lies the essence of civilisation? It lies in its spiritual outlook, its conception of human nature and freedom, human destiny and relationships. I hope in times to come the world, torn by wars, will be the home of common humanity and civilisation National prejudice and racial differences will die their natural death.

The Vedic Rishis and Seers realised their deep bond to humanity. The sufferings of mankind moved their hearts. They wanted to help man find freedom. They examined life and sought its meaning and true goal. They saw its tragic reality, its illusions, its sorrows, fleeting joys and sufferings. They experienced Truth through inquiry, practice and revelation. They realised the Self and suffering dropped off like a ripe fruit. The great teachers declare that they have known the Great Person, luminous like the sun, beyond darkness and through Him have conquered death. This Divine Self dwells in the hearts of men framed by thought, intelligence and mind.

This Self, hidden in the hearts of men, cannot be known by one who is dull or restless, who is not disciplined or self-controlled. Nor can It be known by much learning or by reasoning. It can be known through Yoga. Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana are the three basic steps laid down by the Upanishads, to Self-realisation. Spiritual life is not intellectual death; but when we have passed beyond all knowings, we shall have Knowledge. Reason is a help, but reason is also a bar. For the thinker, God is in the heart; but for the Knowers, the Divine is everywhere.

Many misconceptions prevail regarding the attitude of Yoga towards the world and worldly values. The world is the manifestation of the Divine. He who lives and works in tune with the Divine lives a true life.

A true life is a life in which action and contemplation blend. A life of contemplation without action is empty. We need both power and vision to make life meaningful. The Upanishads picture life as a pilgrimage into the heart of the Eternal. Man has both *Sura* (divine) and *Asura* (undivine) in him. A constant Kurukshetra war is being waged for ever on the anvil of his heart between the forces of light and the powers of darkness. A true and meaningful life is one which is lived in harmony with the inmost Being. The civilised man of today suffers from the repression of the divine in him.

The young people all over the world should grow up in innocence, in a healthy atmosphere, for they belong to the *noons* of the future; they are children of Immortality. Parents and teachers, who guide them at home and at school should inculcate in them good values, habits of self-control and self-discipline. Without such discipline they will not be able to make proper judgements in life.

Yoga does not advocate unnatural suppression of sex. For, a normal love life is an essential condition of growth and proper manhood and spirituality. Sex is neither wrong nor sinful. But under its influence people often lose sight of the higher function and promise of life. It is for this reason that people fear sex.

Yoga is not the cessation of human relationships. It is a new relationship through knowledge, strength and freedom. It is a relationship that brings joy and not sorrow. So long as we have not discovered our Self, our relationship with the world is imperfect and the cause of unhappiness.

Yoga is not the denial of true personality. It rejects the illusion of our separate individuality. When one knows one's true essence, the body, mind and intellect are seen as instruments of the Divine in us.

Yoga philosophy and Hindu religion do not preach a kind of selfish self-absorption, ignoring one's duty and obligation to one's neighbour. In no other religious literature of the world do we find such a universal concern with society and humanity as in the Bhagavad Gita. The Divine works in us and through us in the world at every moment. Man's life and progress depend on society and a person who does not repay his debt to society with selfless service is like a thief. Action with vision is the teaching of the Gita. Mahatma Gandhi's Yoga was the Yoga of action to find God through selfless service to man. Yoga is not aloofness from the world but disinterested activity without caring for the fruit of action. In the Hindu tradition it is believed that the Divine dwells in the heart of man and the ultimate fulfilment of life lies in the realisation of this truth. Hinduism is properly the name of a society not a religion. The Hindus call their religion *Manavadharma* or *Sanatanadharma*.

In the widest sense, all life is Yoga because the same secret urge for the manifestation of the Truth lies behind all activity. But only a few people follow the goal with vision, while many others grope in the dark. Knowingly or unknowingly, we are all seeking the same ideal. Yoga is therefore both the means and the end, the way and the goal.

Now I shall speak of Hatha Yoga which developed as a branch of Raja Yoga and Dhyana Yoga. Hatha Yoga is a system of health and hygiene involving both body and mind. It is a perfectly practical system of self-culture. One can attain harmonious development of body, mind, intellect and soul by the practice of Yoga. Shatkriyas, Asanas, Pranayama, Mudras, Bandhas and exercises in concentration and meditation, constitute Hatha Yoga which leads to the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti and ultimate union with God in Samadhi.

Hatha means force. The idea behind Hatha Yoga was to create the physical conditions for superconscious awareness. The Hatha Yogi's original aim was to achieve Samadhi for Self-realisation by a long, complicated process of physical training, cleansing and fasting so that the mind could be more easily withdrawn and made perfectly calm.

In course of time, Hatha Yoga came to be developed in an extraordinary manner for physical power and the benefits it brought. Many who were attracted to it lacked high spiritual motive and understanding. Divorced from its spiritual motive, it became an elaborate technique of gaining control over the body and its functions. Through long practice and devotion, some acquire a mastery over the body and preserve youthful health and vitality for a long time.

They can perform marvellous feats which astound people such as remaining buried under earth for several days, stopping heart-beats, swallowing nails, glass, poison, etc. Spirituality has no relation with such unholy practices. People who perform them are generally crude, lacking in perfection and purity of motive. Sensationalism and exhibitionism are far removed from the true spirit of Yoga.

Spiritual teachers do not approve of the more extreme practices of Hatha Yoga. But the simple principles and practices of Hatha Yoga are excellent for preserving youthfulness and health, improving body function and recovering lost powers. They improve the internal organs, viz., liver, brain, pancreas, intestines, heart, lungs, brain, thyroid and parathyroid at the roof of the neck, adrenals in spleen, pituitary and pineal glands in the brain which play a very important part in the economy of nature in maintaining health in metabolism, in structure growth and nutrition of different kinds of cells and tissues of the body. Combined with the practice of meditation, Hatha Yoga is the best form of physical culture and hygiene for the civilised man.

Hatha is considered to be a compound word in Sanskrit formed of two syllables Ha and Tha. 'Ha' means the moon (Ida Nadi) and 'Tha' means the sun (Pingala). Hatha Yoga aims to balance and harmonise the sun and the moon, the Prana and Apana, for higher contemplation.

Yoga is both power and knowledge. But misconception about power is all the more unfortunate in the case of those who seek spiritual freedom.

To find the Truth we must become one with It in the supreme silence of contemplation. When through Samadhi man experiences the unity underlying the plurality of forms then, in the words of the Upanishads, the knots of his heart are sundered, all his doubts vanish, and his actions cease. He whose Self is united with the Spirit by the practice of Yoga sees the Spirit in all beings and all beings in the Spirit. The Spirit is infinite and manifestation is finite.

The modern man suffers from the repression of the Divine in him. He is out of touch with reality. He lives in false hopes and unjustifiable dreams and is bound in slavery to one thing or another. There can be no solution to the tragedy and enigma of existence, no redemption from evil and no realisation of our idealistic aspirations, unless we find the higher Truth. Yoga is the search for and the realisation of this Truth. And the highest truth of life is Self-realisation.

Now let us listen to Sri Krishna on true Yoga: "No one who has not renounced the egotistic purpose ever becomes a Yogi. Save the self by the Self. The Self alone is the friend of self and the Self alone is the enemy of self. The Yogi whose mind is controlled and concentrated on the Self is likened to a lamp which is without a flicker in a windless place. Supreme happiness comes to the Yogi whose mind is peaceful, whose passions are at rest and who is stainless and one with the Divine."

THE BHAGAVADGITA *Seventh Edition*
With Sanskrit Text, Word-to-word Meaning, Translation and Commentary in English
By
H.H. Swami Sivananda
Pages 680; Size Demy 8vo Rs. 12.50
(Packing and Forwarding Charges Extra)

The Place of Yoga In Modern Society

(Dr. K.S. Joshi)

Yoga, the ancient art of the Hindus, appears to be becoming more and more popular nowadays in the world outside India. Only a few years ago "Yoga" was a mere dictionary word. It was not common even in the very highly educated people to know its meaning. There had been a tradition in India to keep the knowledge of Yoga secret and limited to a selected few, and it was not very easy for anybody to learn the principles and techniques of Yoga from any respected Guru unless one passed certain strict qualifying tests. It was believed by and large, and even among the practitioners of Yoga that it was a subject lying beyond the ken of the man in the street. It was common to think about an individual who wanted to take up any serious inquiry into the field of Yoga that he was a loss to his family and the society. People actually had to abandon everything and take refuge in the Yoga schools (Ashrams) situated in the jungles. This situation prevailed in India since time immemorial.

The first change in the secret and restricted manner of teaching Yoga took place in the second decade of the present century, when Swami Kuvalayananda, founder of the famous Kaivalyadhama Research Institute, Lonavala, in India, hit upon the idea that unless the ancient claims of Yoga are put to the test of modern science, and are interpreted in terms of scientific knowledge the field of Yoga is bound to continue to be shrouded in mystery. He, thus initiated scientific research in Yoga in his institute, in the year 1924. A good deal of scientific information regarding various aspects of Yoga has, since then, been collected and published.

But even in spite of the best efforts on the part of the Kaivalyadhama institute, Yoga was really never very popular in India, not to talk of anywhere else. The first signs in the direction of popularity of Yoga in the general public were evident nearly a decade after the end of the second world war. The war brought a tremendous advancement in science and technology. Year after year there were new discoveries in practically every branch of knowledge. Distances in space and on earth started getting shorter and shorter. A new era of tremendous speed was begun. The daily life of the common man progressively grew more and more active and eventful. Progress of science brought the external world more and more under man's control. But this development was one-sided; with the progress of the speed-age, the feeling of insecurity was growing, too. Thus, with the distances between places on earth decreasing, the distances between men's hearts were seen to be increasing. There was no corresponding growth and expansion of the human intellect to cope up with the changes brought about by the development of science. Increased control on the external nature must be accompanied by a much superior control of the inner nature, also. But the absence of the inner control has led to a great deal of tension, friction, and conflict in the world of today. In the wake of a superabundance of the things of sense-enjoyment there is poverty of the internal apparatus, the mind. This imbalance between man's control on the nature of the happenings inside and outside him is really the root-cause of the unhappiness and misery confronting the human race today. If this sorry state of affairs is to be corrected, we will have to take recourse to some technique, method, or discipline which would be effective in establishing the lost balance once again.

In ancient times religion was supposed to be responsible to do this job. And perhaps it did it quite efficiently during the prescientific days of the history of mankind. Philosophy and ethics were the other two disciplines which were also engaged in the task of explaining to mankind the nature of the ultimate goal of all human endeavour, and to show what one ought to do and how to mould the behaviour in order to realise the goal as quickly as possible in one's life. All these three disciplines went on very well as long as science was taken to be a part of philosophy. But this situation was vastly changed with the development, in the seventeenth century, of the individual sciences, viz., physics, biology, and later on, psychology. These sciences started growing independently as having their own provinces unconcerned with philosophy. Further developments in these areas of knowledge led to the establishment of the scientific method in both thinking out and doing things. The essence of this method lies in the principle that for each one of our statements, to be significant, there must be some evidence that will be observable and repeatable. The scientific rigour introduced by this method in thinking, however, brought many age-old claims of philosophy and religion into conflict with the findings of science. As a result, the influence of philosophy and religion on human life has been vanishing progressively. They have lost their significance for providing guide-lines to human behaviour. So, with all the religions and philosophies in the world there is yet no end to conflict and war. To put an end to it, we seem to need a new method, some kind of new discipline, which will not only teach us how to think properly but will also show us a practical way of behaving in daily life so that we remain at peace with ourselves as well as with the external world.

Luckily for us, we do not have to go far to seek for such a discipline. It is already there, in the form of Yoga, the ancient wisdom of the East. Yoga, to be sure, offers us a set of practices which make for perfect physical and mental health. It also teaches us how to relax so as to get rid of muscular and mental tensions. It can help us to overcome many of our ailments and to prevent many others. Above all, it gives a way of breathing and meditation which, if followed sufficiently long enough, helps to bring about such changes in our personalities and in our very outlook that we become perfectly balanced and integrated in our thoughts and actions.

Yoga, if administered in a proper manner, can, thus, prove to be a boon to our sick society today. We have neglected it so far, and have paid very dearly for this mistake. Let us not repeat the mistake any more, and adopt Yoga as a way of life. Perhaps that is the only way we can save humanity from a possible danger of extinction. And, the sooner we realise this, the better.

Festivals: Their Intrinsic Value and Significance

(Sri K. Thiagarajan)

Festivals are always associated with mirth and joy. Generally, festivals can be divided into two kinds, those involving feasting and therefore indicative of the happy mood of the people, and those involving fasting indicative of a serene, ascetic mood. Though festivals are of many kinds, usually they are associated with the religion of the particular group or society which celebrates them. Ordinarily the main purpose of festivals seems to be recreational, and the people forget their hardships and difficulties during that time.

Festivals: Their Growth and Origin: Festivals have, to a great extent, been born out of the collective group-consciousness of the primitive men. Festivals should have been instituted originally with the primary motive of welding the world-group into one unit and hence most of the rituals were performed on a collective basis. Meals partaken of in common assumed the air of religious ceremonies.

Since, in the ancient days, most of the civilizations were agricultural in their basic character, their festivals too were mostly related to the various agricultural operations. People thought in those days that certain divine powers were associated with the various aspects of human life, and hence they had festivals in honour of these gods and goddesses who were supposed to control operations like ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc. Hence many festivals were purely seasonal thanksgivings. Whenever the prosperity of the society depended on a river, the society had festivals in connection with the arrival of the fishes in the river, the rising of the waters and the opening up of a canal and also festivals to prevent disastrous floods in the rivers.

Festivals as a Political Lever: Festivals entail a great deal of expenditure which an average man can ill afford. Hence we find that festivals which are originally occasions for pleasure and rest slowly change into close and inescapable celebrations which are a part of social tyranny. But they come to stay and become part of the fabric of society, though their economic consequences are very disturbing. It is not all that can convert duty into pleasure, and perform all these formalities in a spirit of devotion. Even as the church began to make use of festivals for its own purposes, the State also began employing them as an effective instrument to keep order and peace. Right from the days of the Roman Empire, festivals have been used as political levers, as safety valves against the dangerous effect of continuous restraint. Since festivals are outlets for the emotions of the people, established authorities have always manifested a professedly benevolent concern to the unstinted supply of amusement and pleasure suited to the tastes of the multitude, because they recognise these a valuable means of allaying disaffection, of blunting the edge of disloyalty and of distracting the popular mind from more dangerous and more serious interests. The extent of the gravity of periods of political and social unrest may easily be gauged to a great extent from the amount of attention devoted by the authorities and the official press to sporting events and festive pageantry. As a result of this, each nation has evolved its own national days in the light of its history and these certainly help to foster the sentiments of loyalty and patriotism among the people. Even democratic, republican and communistic governments make use of festivals. Collective festivals are a powerful means of influencing the psychology of the crowds and are the most concrete manifestations of collective emotions and loyalties.

Tourist Value of Festivals: Festivals have always attracted people to particular places, thereby helping them to understand one another by coming into close contact during such occasions. In our own country we find numerous people visiting Allahabad for the Mela, Puri for the car-festival, Mysore for the Dasara, Kumbakonam for Mahamakam and Madurai for the Chitrai festivals. In Europe also we similarly find people going to Belgium for the yearly procession of the Holy Blood in May. Siena (Italy) draws them for the picturesque horse race in honour of Virgin Mary on 2nd July, and 16th August. On 20th August, Budapest (Hungary) has a national Hungarian festival dedicated to St. Stephen. Even in the new world we find that all roads lead to the Washington Memorial on July 4, the Independence Day of the Americans.

Promoters of Arts and Culture: It is natural that festivals are usually accompanied by fairs and exhibitions. This is a common feature all over the world. Wherever there is a public religious festival we find some kind of exhibition or display which offers people opportunities to express their talents in music and dance and occasions to exhibit products of their creative skill. We find the touch of the artist in every detail of the festival, in the way in which the idols are carved, in the decoration of the temple cars, in the illumination of the precincts, in the paintings on the walls, in the arrangements of the materials, etc. Apart from fostering the arts, festivals also reflect the social habits and traits of the people. Festivals greatly foster tourism, and also become silent but effective cultural ambassadors of a community.

Employment Potential: The rituals connected with festivals entail the use of several articles prescribed by scripture or custom. The fairs held on such occasions also provide an excellent opportunity for various articles to be marketed. Both lead to the production of different kinds of ware and this naturally sets in motion a chain of economic processes, thereby helping the flow of money and affecting some redistribution of wealth. Each region is endowed with certain peculiar natural resources. Many skills also are hereditary and are peculiar to certain people in certain localities. So naturally each festival comes to be associated with a fair or fairs dealing in particular products. This phenomenon avoids unnecessary competition and duplication of handicraft products in the making of which quality counts far more than quantity, and this helps retain the niceties of high workmanship and fosters the economic growth of different communities.

Universalism of Festivals: Every nation has its own festivals and every festival its own modes. Though nations may be placed far apart and their cultures may appear to be totally different from one another, a comparative study of the festivals celebrated all over the world leads us to the understanding that there is some underlying current which unifies the thought processes of various communities in formulating festivals.

The festivals of lamps celebrated in India as Dipavali are found to be celebrated in one form or another in the Chinese, Egyptian, Hebrew, Jain, Muslim and Siamese societies. Similarly, even as we celebrate our first harvest as Pongal (in South India), a festival akin to it is celebrated by the Siamese as Maha Songkron and the ploughing festivals. The Greeks too had their festivals for a good harvest. We also learn that the ancient Hebrews had their festivals of Sheaf-offering, festivals of Weeks (harvest) and festivals of Ingathering i.e., thanksgiving for the produce of the threshing floor and the wine press.

To summarise, festivals have not only deep and ancient foundations but also fulfil quite a number of useful practical purposes. The names of festivals may be numerous, forms fantastic, rituals cumbersome and expenses heavy; and they may be ancient or modern, spiritual or temporal. In spite of all these manifold characteristics, there is one single thread running through all these. The sole aim and purpose of all festivals is to compose the differences between the various component units of a society, promote opportunities for co-operation, and weld the society into one composite unit. There may be some mysticism surrounding the festivals. As has been well said, mysticism is the description of the religious life which consists in the fusion of the individual with God. If civilisation is 'a progress from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite and coherent heterogeneity, festivals are surely one of the most potent agencies for effecting this progress and for preserving the solidarity and strength of the society.

Remember

[Sri N.S.V.Row, B.Sc. (Engg.)]

Sri Swami Sivananda said: "Remember death. Remember the pains of Samsara. Remember Saints. Remember God". These are indeed meaningful and revealing statements of inestimable value. Let us endeavour to peep into their real significance.

Remember Death: Why should we remember death? Because, death is an eye opener. But for death, there would be no religion. Death indicates to you the real worth of the human tabernacle. It tells you that the body is worthless and that you should not get attached to it. The moment death occurs, the body loses all lustre and becomes a burden even to the nearest kith and kin. Be it a saint or a sinner, a king or a peasant, a man or a woman, the dead body must be thrown out of the house, nay, it should be either buried or cremated, because if it is kept for a day longer, it gives out an unbearably foul smell. Even a leaf thrown out after food is taken, has some value. But the dead body has none. The very sight of it is repulsive. It is intended only for jackals and vultures. Death may pounce upon you at any moment. It may be during the day or at night. It may be in one's childhood, youth or old age. It attacks you most unconventionally, unawares, without prior notice. It does not care whether you are healthy or unhealthy, sleeping or awake, conscious or unconscious. Therefore, you must take ample care of every second at your disposal and use it most profitably towards attainment of higher values.

It was Lord Yama, the God of Death, who revealed Brahma-Vidya to Natchiketas. Again, the day on which a person dies may be viewed as his judgment day, because the last thought determines his future birth or status. If he has taken care to remember the name of the Lord day in and day out during his lifetime, the last thought would be obviously that of the Lord. To him, wise men say, there will be no rebirth. He will merge with the Cosmic Self. Thus

Death cautions us to repeat the Lord's name incessantly without any respite. Some one has said that it is wise enough to think each day as the last day of one's life, so that one could remember one's duty to God every day and safeguard one's future.

Remember the Pains of Samsara: What is *Samsara?* It is the procession of worldly existence. *Samsara* is expressed in a number of ways: *Samsara-Chakra*, the wheel of fortune; the *Janana-Marana-Chakra*, (the wheel of birth and death), *Samsara-Sagara*, (the ocean of *Samsara*); and *Samsara-Vriksha* (the tree of *Samsara*).

The wheel of *Samsara* (temporal becoming) rolls on and on, endlessly. Its spokes are *Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada* and *Matsarya*. Its axle is egoism,—*Ahamkara*. The rim represents the objects. The propelling force is *Prarabdha*. Man commits the same acts of sin again and again, being actuated by the never-satiated desire, and reaps the consequences again and again, but does not learn to get extricated from the vortex of Samsara.

The *Samsara-Sagara* is the ocean of earthly existence. The ocean is full of the crocodiles of wife and children, the whales of society, the sea-monsters of likes and dislikes, and the waves of ups and downs. The ocean has deep in its bosom the pearls of wisdom also. But normally man does not care to dive deep into the ocean to pick up the pearls. He is caught up by the pains of *Samsara* enumerated above.

The Samsara-Vriksha has its roots above and the branches below. "One who understands the nature of this Samsara-Vriksha goes beyond Maya. To be attached to it is to be caught in it. The surest way of cutting down this tree (transcending *Samsara*) is by the excellent weapon of non-attachment and dispassion".

What are the pains of *Samsara?* The greatest pain is Ignorance—ignorance of one's essential Divine nature, ignorance of the Reality of God and the hollowness of sensual pleasures, ignorance of the technique of 'Pratipaksha-bhavana' (thinking the opposite of an undesirable emotion) ignorance of the rules of health, ignorance of the fundamentals of social etiquette, etc.

From birth to death man is exposed to a series of pains. Birth of a baby is a painful experience both to the mother and the baby. During childhood, the baby faces so many dangers (Bala-Arishtas). Youth is a passing fantasy. Lastly, old age is a stage where man is helpless and has to depend upon the whims and fancies and mercy of his sons and is subject to many physical ailments.

Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda gives us a fine illustration:

A man falls into an old well, being chased by a tiger. Luckily for him, half way from ground-level, a tree was projecting out from the side of the well. The man caught hold of the tree and hung himself down. A crocodile was in the water below with its jaws open ready to devour the man, in case he fell headlong in the water. A venomous serpent was advancing towards the man along the branch of the tree. Two rats were busy biting away the roots of the tree. At this juncture a few drops of honey, poisoned by the sting of a wasp, were falling into the well from a bee-hive situated on the branch of a tree, just above the well. Of course the tiger was roaring and getting restless to get at the man. Thus the man was facing death from all sides. The tiger from above, the snake on the branch and the crocodile below were all agents of Yama. Little mindful of these sure signs of the approaching death, the man was trying to protrude his tongue to taste the poisoned drops of honey. This is exactly the state of man in this Samsara.

The snake is nothing but the Kala-Sarpa (vehemence of Time), the time which sweeps away kings and barons. The two rats are the day and night which gradually lead men to their final destination on this earth, viz., death. In spite of the many invitations to his inevitable end man seeks sense-gratification. He is in the clutches of a never-ending vicious circle, the Samsara Chakra.

A little bit of analysis will drive home the fact that contact with objects is awfully painful, though alluring, and too much of sense-gratification and sex-gratification are self-destructive. There is not a single sincere friend in this world. Relatives are there only to suck your blood. Everyone is selfish and everyone exploits situations to the maximum degree. These are all pains of Samsara which must be reflected upon daily in order to cut them all, root and branch.

Remember Saints: Who is a saint? A saint is he who has crossed the ocean of Samsara. He is a visible manifestation of God on earth. He has risen above likes and dislikes. He has experienced God. He is an embodiment of goodness and virtue. Having realised the Highest, the Reality, he dedicates his whole life for Loka-Sangraha. He loves all. He serves all. He is pure and perfect. He is in constant touch with the Divine. He has no ties. He has no attachment. He has no delusion. He sees divinity, in and through his busy day to day activities. He is simple like a child. In his presence people forget all the ills of Samsara. There is a well-defined aura surrounding his face. Wherever he goes, he charges the atmosphere surrounding him with vibrations of Divinity. He bears insult and injury. He ever forgets and forgives. He is a shining example of sincerity, simplicity, and steadfastness. He has conquered anger. He serves the poor and nurses the sick. He is a source of inspiration to one and all.

Ekanath was a saint *par excellence.* He had conquered anger. His name spread far and wide. A landlord was jealous of him. The landlord wanted to put Ekanath to shame and to make him angry. A poor Brahmin approached the landlord for financial help in connection with the marriage of his daughter. The landlord said that he would help the Brahmin if he went to Ekanath and made him angry. The Brahmin went to Ekanath and began to abuse him in slang language. Ekanath was unmoved. On the other hand, he treated the Brahmin with all kindness and courtesy and invited him to dinner. When food was being served, the Brahmin jumped on the back of Ekanath's wife. Without exhibiting the least signs of annoyance, Ekanath cautioned his wife not to stand erect, lest the Brahmin should fall down and get hurt. His wife said that she knew how to treat the child on her back and requested her husband not to be perturbed. The Brahmin saw the futility of his attempt and with much remorse fell at the feet of the saint, imploring his pardon. The saint patted the Brahmin on his back. This is the way of saints. They reform people by personal example. Example is better than precept. That is why we should remember saints and their ways of living and make them our ideals for attainment.

Remember God: Why should we remember God? A very silly question indeed! God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He is the indweller of all beings, of all objects. He is our Protector, our Saviour. He is the interpenetrating essence of all that Is. He is the only Reality. All else is unreal. He is the Source of all sources. He is the King of kings, Emperor of emperors, Shah of Shahs, Maharajah of Maharajahs, Ruler of rulers. He is both visible and invisible. He is beyond reason, beyond intellect and beyond human comprehension. He is beyond the pairs of opposites. Therefore we must remember Him. Realise God and you will have everything.

Charity and Divine Life

(Dr. C.S. Venkateswaran)

Human life is rendered divine through charity and kindness (*danam, daya bhuteshu*) which are included among the divine qualities (Daivi Sampat) in the Bhagavadgita. The greatness of charity is expressed in a hymn of the Rig-Veda (X-117). The hymn emphasizes the necessity for helping the poor and the needy, points to the fickleness of fortune, stresses the need for giving food to the hungry and upholds the dignity of work.

He is the liberal man who gives to the beggar, who craving food, emaciated, wanders.

Sa idbhojo yo grihave dadatyannakamaya
charate krisaya

(RV)

The needy person becomes qualified to receive help. Bhishma says to Yudhishthira—"O son of Kunti, support the poor. Do not give wealth to the rich. Medicine is good for the ailing person. Of what use is medicine to the healthy person"?

Daridran bhara kaunteya ma
prayachhesvare dhanam;
Vyadhitasyaushadham pathyam
nirujasya kimaushadhaih

(M. Bh.)

Charity is an integral part of Dharma and is particularly associated with the Kali age. Dharma is depicted as a sacred Bull, the showerer of all desires (*Vrisho hi bhagavan dharmah*) in Manu Smriti. (8-16) It is supported on the four legs of austerity (Tapas), wisdom (Jnana), worship (Yajna) and charity (Dana), each one being more dominant than the other three in the successive Yugas of Krita, Treta, Dvapara and Kali.

Tapah param kritayuge tretayam
jnanam-uchyate;
Dvapare yajnameva-ahuh danamekam
kalau yuge

(M.S. I-86)

The Mahabharata considers the gift of food as the best of all gifts. (*Sarvesham eva dananam annam sreshtham udahritam*). An honest man desirous of doing Dharma, should first offer food (*Purvam annam pradatavyam rjuna dharmam icchata*). Food is the life of mortals and beings are born therefrom (*Prano hyannam manushyanam, Tasmat jantuscha jayate*). The world rests on food; hence it is praised (*Anne pratishthito lokah, tasmad annam prasasyate*). This idea is elaborated in many portions of the *Dana-dharma-parvan.* It deals with the various aspects of gift—the ideal donor and donee, the ideal donation and the time and place for giving it. Those men attain Heaven who perform Dharma adhering to its essential aspects of charity (Dana), austerity (Tapas) and Truth (Satya).

Danena tapasa chaiva satyena
cha yudhishthira;
Ye dharmam-anuvartante te narah
svargagaminah.

He is no friend who gives not of his belongings, to his devoted, intimate companion.

Na sa sakha yo na dadati sakhye sa
chabhuve sachamanaya pitvah.
(RV)

A friend is to be tested in times of adversity (*Mitram apatsu janiyat*). The wealthier man should give unto the needy, considering the long course of life hereafter.

Priniyadinnadhamanaya tavyan draghi-
yamsamanu pasyeta pantham
(RV)

Charity should flow from the wealthier to the poor and should gladden the heart and quench the desire like the water that flows from the hand of the donor along with the gift to the hand of the recipient placed below. Gifts should be sanctified by faith and sincerity. They should not be tainted by indifference. (*Sraddhaya deyam; Asraddhaya adeyam*). That gift is commendable which is given in a spirit of duty to a deserving person who is incapable of returning the good, and at the proper place and time (*Datavyam iti yad danam diyate anupakarine, Dese kale cha patre cha tad danam sattvikam smritam.* Bh. Gita. 17-20). The Mahabharata says that those men attain Heaven who give gifts of dress, drink and food and support helpless families:

Vastrabharanadataro bhakshya-
panannadastatha;
Kutumbanam cha bhartarah
purushah svargagaminah
(M. Bh.)

It is a rare blessing to continue to be a giver in this world of change. The mendicant who begs is considered to be a teacher. Wandering from door to door, he is not begging, but is instructing thus: "Do not be (a beggar) like me by not giving; by giving, may you continue to be (a giver) as you are (in future also).

Dvaram dvaramatan bhikshuh
sikshatyevam na yachate;
Adatva madrisho ma bhuh datva
tvam tvadriso bhava

Riches are like chariot-wheels revolving,
Now to one man they come, now to another.

O hi vartante rathyeva chakra-
anyamanyamupa tishthanti rayah
(RV)

Fortune is ever revolving and changing its sides like the wheel or its parts moving up and down. Plutarch says: "The wheel of life is ever on the round, while one side is up, the other is on the ground. This idea is expressed by Bhasa, Kalidasa and others. With the course of Time, Fortune revolves like the spokes of the wheel.

Kalakramena jagatah parivartamana
chakrarapanktiriva gachhati
bhagyapanktih
(Svapna Act. I)

Kalidasa says in Megha-sandesa: "Like the rim of the wheel, Fortune comes down and moves upwards."

Nichairgachhatyupari cha dasa chakra-
nemikramena
(M.S. II. 49)

Therefore cling not too much to fleeting Fortune. It is unsteady like the waves (*Lakshmih toya-taranga-bhanga-chapala*) and life itself is fleeting like lightning (*Vidyut-chalam jivitam*).

Moghamannam vindate aprachetah satyam
bravimi vadha it sa tasya;
Naryamanam pushyati no sakhayam
kevalagho bhavati kevaladi
(RV)

The thoughtless man obtains food in vain,
In truth, I say, it is his undoing.
No friend he ever fosters, no companion,
He eats alone, and is alone the sinner.

Krishannit phala asitam krinoti yanna-
dhvanamapa vrinkte charitraih;
Vadan brahmavadato vaniyan
prinannapiraprinantamabhi shyat
(RV)

The niggardly hoarder of food acquires neither good nor friends. He eats sin by eating all alone. "Those who cook for themselves only, verily eat sin"—says the Gita (*Bhunjate te tvagham papah, ye pachanti atma-karanat.* III.13)

The plough that cleaves the soil produces nurture,
He that bestirs his feet completes his journey.
The scholar chanting the Veda is better than the silent,
A friend who gives is better than the niggard.

The above verse denounces indolence and praises work. One should make the best use of one's talents, intellectual or physical for the sake of others. Inactivity is sin. One should never be a parasite on others. Help should not be one-sided. Mutual help and trust only can promote general weal. (*Parasparam bhavayantah sreyah param avapsyatha.* Gita III-11) The unused plough does not benefit the soil. Human potentialities benefit mankind only when put to proper use. The idle make no progress. The ant, ever on the move, covers long distances (*Gacchan pipiliko yati yojananam satanyapi*). But the unmoving eagle, though capable of flying fast, moves not a step forward (*Agacchan vainateyo'pi padam ekam na gacchati*). A diligent person only obtains the sweet fruits of his labours (*Charan vai madhu vindati.* A.B. 7-15-3). Therefore always be on the move (*Charaiva*). Following such a motto is beneficial to oneself and to the progress of Society.

What is Religion?

(Col. T.B. Pahlajani)

(Continued from the previous Issue)

Earlier, religion has been called a difficult science. The difficulty consists mainly in the ability to subjugate the mind which is an absolute prerequisite to meditation. This is very difficult at first, but this should not deter you from practising meditation for there is no other course and a beginning must be made, otherwise, how do you hope to make any progress? This alone will take many births to accomplish.

Guru Nanak says there are eighty-four lac lives through which the soul has to pass in its ladder of evolution. Do not be disheartened. Having got to human stage we must have passed through a large majority of them.

The mind has got tremendous dynamism. Its energies are stupendous, ordinarily its energies are spent up by its profitless wanderings, through the Indriyas (sense-organs) into the world-objects. When all possible wanderings are blocked the energies of the mind are conserved. Therefore control your sense-organs.

In Radio-Broadcasting system invisible vibrations are sent out by the Broadcasting station, which are received by a properly tuned receiving set. So also every human being sends out powerful invisible vibrations which are caught by a well-tuned mind—well-concentrated mind of a saint. This is how a saint can read your mind.

In the case of the broadcasting system electric power is used, in the human broadcasting system the motive force is will-power as in clairvoyance, telepathy and thought-reading. Indeed without will no action is possible.

Do you know human body has electricity and it is by electricity that the brain exercises its control over the functioning of the body.

Further, as a powerful Radio transmitting station can make a properly equipped distant vehicle on the moon, millions of miles away, to function so also a man with highly developed mind can make another person do what he wants him to do. This is how a saint with his power-house of concentrated mind (will-power) can influence you.

Mind cannot be concentrated except when it is purified. All these Kirtans and Bhajans, Japa and Tapas, Temple-going, Brahmin-feeding and Charities only help to purify the mind and make it fit for concentrated Meditation. They are no direct passport to the Kingdom of God.

Don't think it is not possible for the mind to be concentrated for, have you not seen that, while you are engaged in a knotty problem, e.g., a mathematical exercise or while reading an interesting book, your mind is so engrossed that you have not noticed the entry of a person in the room, not even heard him when he spoke to you? The point is to be able to control the mind at will so as to make concentrated meditation possible. You cannot do without the mind. The question is to control the mind instead of allowing yourself to be subservient to it. You should be the master of your mind so that it does your bidding and you can make it work as and when you want it. Body and mind are good servants but bad masters.

With a controlled mind we can rise above the problems of life. It would be impossible to pick the thorns of the world or solve all its problems. You can get over them only by wearing the strong shoes of will-power i.e. power over your mind. With developed will-power we can face the ups and downs of the world bravely so as to exhaust our Karmas with as little mental and physical disturbance as possible. We come to a stage where the worldly situations make us neither happy nor unhappy. The real happiness we can get only when we merge back with the Lord.

If any one has hurt your feelings you are fretting and fuming within you, you want to take revenge. What will happen? The quarrel will increase and there will be no end to revenge and counter-revenge. Would it not be more glorious if you show the magnanimity of "forgive and forget" and thus get over it. Would it not bring more understanding, more peace in you and harmony with others. Even in everyday life a concentrated mind is a great asset and achieves great results. It can solve weighty problems that no ordinary mind can. All the inventions and discoveries in the material fields and the religious world are the results of concentrated mind.

Mind suffers from (1) *Avarana*—Avidya —ignorance of the real Self which can be removed by the knowledge of the Self—the path of knowledge at the level of the intellect. (2) *Vikshepa*—agitations of the mind which are caused by desires.

Mind is attacked from both outside and inside, by desires arising from outside by the sense-objects and from inside by its stored-away memories and self-created imaginations as also by desires surging from the intellect. It is therefore clear that to purify the mind which is as it were the contaminating factor of the Atman (Ego), the sense-organs must be controlled and desires curtailed while at meditation the mind wanders towards worldly objects, detachment from the world in thought and action is the only course. The mind must be cultivated.

Meditation can never be successful if the mind is agitated by desires. In a sensuous life one is never without some desire or other. Therefore control of sense-organs is the first step in the ladder of evolution. Even in ordinary life overindulgence leads to doom and death. Spiritual life requires complete abstinence from the five Vikaras.

Some devotees stand in one position or stand in water for hours and days, some in very hot weather surround themselves with fire, others lie on nails. Torturing the physical body is of no avail. It is the vagrant mind which is at fault.

Yoga: These are physical, exercises to keep body in good trim. They have nothing to do with meditation. These exercises, were devised by Rishis because they were confined to their caves where they carried on their meditation and these physical exercises were necessary to keep the body in health but they have nothing to do with spirituality. Pranayama (breathing exercise) and Hatha Yoga come under this category. By relaxing the body, these exercises are means to meditation and never the end in themselves. A Yogi tries to control the mind via the physical body by controlling the breath.

Yoga has reference to disciplined activity and control of the body; and with reference to the mind it means control and concentration of the mind through deep meditation with thoughts withdrawn from the external world-objects and concentrated inwardly on the Atman.

Hence Yoga consists of overcoming the limitations of the B.M.I. It means the cultivation of the body, mind and intellect. As it is far easier to carry on the physical exercises than to cultivate the subtle mind and intellect, many stop at the physical cultivation of the body call themselves Yogins and spiritual men.

Yoga of the body, is a tedious and strenuous process; it is the Yoga of the mind which is required. Mastery of mind over the body, intellect must be allowed to rule over the mind and Atman must rule over them all.

Yoga really means union. Any spiritual practice that takes you nearer God comes to be called Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga etc.

Yajna: Similarly Yajna which used to be a sacrificial worship of fire and continues to this day in a symbolic manner, a celebrated form of propitiation of gods and deities, has come to mean, by Sri Veda Vyasa's renaissance of Hindu religion, "A combined effort on the part of a few for the good of many." e.g. Swami Chinmayananda's famous Yajnas (public lectures) have come to be called Yajnas.

Tapas does not consist in physical stunts or practices. Tapas leads to concentration of mind.

Yoga does not consist in flying through air, or walking over the waters, or drinking poison or eating pieces of glass or materialising things out of thin air. Yoga is living in the midst of the world's temptations but being ever united to God.

Certain people by mere force of willpower can concentrate their mind through severe Tapas even without controlling their Vikaras (the five passions). Just as the Sun's rays concentrated through a lens can burn things so also the power of concentrated mind is so great that coupled with concerted practices and by controlling some of the centres of energy in the physical body e.g. Kundalini and other Chakras, they can acquire certain Riddhis and Siddhis. There are eighteen Siddhis of which eight are important: Two pertain to assumption of small or large size, two pertain to weight, transporting oneself anywhere even on the moon, fulfilling other's desires, ability to create thing, ability to acquire mastery over others, (occult powers) by which they can perform miracles. To this class also belong many of the Devatas mentioned in Bhagavata including Indra for they have not controlled their Vikaras. Even such Devatas cannot make any further progress. They too, to attain Moksha, must come back to human life and go through all the spiritual disciplines. In this respect Gods and Goddesses are no better than us.

These powers automatically come to saints who have attained higher stages in spirituality but are averse to using them, never for their own gain. To interfere with Divine law is a sin.

But saints have reached the stage beyond sinning. They perforce may have to exhibit supernatural powers for the emancipation of men to create faith in them such as Christ, Guru Nanak and others. They all showed miracles. How otherwise can you have faith in a saint.

There are many men of Riddhis and Siddhis roaming the country impressing people by their imposing feats e.g. walking on fire, lying on nails, driving blind-folded through crowded streets and they put up a good magician's show but they have nothing to do with spirituality.

Mind is always taking you away from God to the worldly pleasures. It is the *Satan* of the Christians and is waging a constant war against God.

In Hindu Philosophy also there is a Satan—'Kal' the negative force, a power which leads man away from the path of righteousness. When God created the world, along with good He created evil; otherwise where Kal could come from. And what is more God handed over the governance of the World to Kal. Hence as stated earlier the world is full of sorrow.

There can be no good without the existence of evil, no day without night, a buyer must have a seller, pleasure cannot exist if there were no pain, opposites must always be there. A white dot cannot be discerned on a white paper, whereas a white dot can be easily seen on a black paper. It is even said evil exists to glorify good.

But how can you reconcile both good and evil coming from God? When the sun is there, shade is there. The sun has only light but the sun also creates the shade. When there is negation of light by some obstacle there is darkness. Similarly when the soul is pointing towards God there is righteousness and when it turns away from the Lord there is evil.

Another answer to evil coming from God is that truly speaking God is beyond good or bad. There is no good or evil in the eyes of God. When one does a bad thing e.g. commits a murder it is a crime in the eyes of man governed by the man-made laws of the land to protect society but by spiritual law the murder was ordained by the law of Karma in which Prarabdha of many a one was involved. The murderer was merely an instrument on behalf of the law of Karma in the hands of God, for which sin he in turn will suffer his Prarabdha.

Kal, which is the same as Maya (delusion), works through the mind. Maya's function is to attempt to divert man from spirit to matter, from Reality to unreality. When the mind looks outwards, the sense objects, it is the Kal. The same mind detaching itself from the world takes us to the Lord. Such souls which show tendency towards God are marked by Him for emancipation and He sends saints to guide the marked souls to the Kingdom of God. That is how it is said when you are on the path a Guru will come to you. He will find you.

Mind is like a river in which thoughts flow. If the waters of the river are muddy the river is muddy, if the water is clean the river is clean. So it is with the mind depending on the purity of the thoughts. And as the mind so the man. If the mind is good the man is good. As the actions are the product of the thoughts (the mind), his actions have a fragrance of goodness. Therefore to control the mind (1) the quantity, (2) the quality of thoughts, and (3) the direction of their flow have to be controlled, meaning that with purity of thought and concentration of the mind, think of the Lord alone.

But, how is this to be achieved?

Pursuit of religion therefore divides itself into two distinct stages, the first is the purification of the mind, i.e., the ethical portion which would lead to a life of Dharma—a life of righteousness, Rama Rajya—Kingdom of God on earth. The other is the spiritual stage, which starts when the Atman enters the fourth—the Turiya stage.

Do not bother about the higher stages at the beginning. Work for the purification of the mind, this will make a better man of you and lead to peace within you and harmony with others. Here your efforts end and your Guru will take over, who will guide you through the final stages.

Religion, at least its ethical portion, helps to build character and prevent individual and national disintegration. We have only to look around all over the world. In India, in the post-independence era, life is dominated by lack of ethics, bribery, corruption, supreme selfishness, personal aggrandisement, untruth, black-market, absence of patriotism, indiscipline, intolerance, immorality; in fact all the negative forces of disruption have gripped the nation from top to bottom in our erstwhile religious country. Problems of India are not political. They are spiritual. Every one fights for his rights but very few are cognisant of their duties. Remember that no rights can survive unless we are faithful in the performance of our respective duties. Hinduism is based on duties (Dharma) and not on rights for rights create competition and chaos.

What is the remedy? The only effective remedy lies as stated earlier in graduated religious teachings from childhood by parents and in schools. This will ensure ethical living and character-building.

The world has evolved into a very highly advanced society based on material progress which has to be experienced to be believed. But the real peace does not stem from such progress and its pursuit through political, social and economic means is a futile exercise, and any number of politicians or social reformers will never be able to create peace in the world at all. It is clear therefore that we must try to explore the possibilities of peace from the viewpoint of human and spiritual considerations. So long we do not discover peace within ourselves we cannot find it outside. Until our soul, which is the essence of the Lord returns to its original Home, its quest for peace will never end and its destination will never be reached.

Mind is ever in a state of agitation caused by the anxiety for the fulfilment of desires or for their unfulfilment. Reduce your wants to barest minimum, lead a simple life, shun luxury. Agitations can be controlled by purity of mind which can be achieved by improving your ethics and doing good actions. "As you sow, so you reap" is an old adage. If you sow neem you cannot expect to harvest apples. Do good deeds, good will come back to you a thousandfold. The same with evil. From one seed spring thousands of fruits.

If you injure some one you will be injured, if you love you will get love in return. If you speak ill of others, others will speak ill of you.

(To be continued)

The Principles of Allopathic Action

(Dr. Aruna)

The body of man is being constantly attacked by millions of diseases bearing germs in the air, water and food. Fortunately, Nature has provided him with certain defence mechanisms which help him resist this ceaseless onslaught, for instance the hair in the nostrils, the eyelashes, the tonsils, the white cells of the blood and the natural inherent resistance of the basic unit of the entire body structure,—the cell. Now, there are two mechanisms by which disease can enter the body:

1. Lowering of the natural resistance.
2. Increased concentration of attacking germs.

The more natural the life, the greater is the inherent resistance. Plenty of fresh air, exercise, sensible eating habits, freedom from mental tension, good sleep,—all these contribute to increasing this resistance. The allopath knows very little about the actual mechanism of this normal resistance. He admits that in most cases the actual cure lies within the body itself. His treatment aims at either enhancing the resistance or in so weakening the invader that the body is able to deal with it. He vaguely knows that the various endocrine glands of the body have something to do with this resistance of which the adrenal glands seem to be the most important. Endocrine glands produce various harmones like Thyroxine, Insulin, Cortisone and Prednisolone. He also knows that a low intake of vitamins in the diet lowers the resistance to infection. Various minerals like sodium, potassium, calcium, iron, iodine are also essential for maintaining normal internal balance which, in turn, upholds this resistance. In order to assimilate the optimum nutrition from food eaten, the secretion of digestive enzymes should be adequate. A diminished secretion of these enzymes would therefore upset the internal balance. A state of mental tension exhausts the endocrine glands, particularly the adrenals, depresses enzyme secretion and puts every muscle into tension. The allopath gives tranquillizers to reduce this tension or soporifics to ensure adequate sleep. In short, in order to supplement the natural resistance he uses drugs like hormones, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, tranquillizers and soporifics. To weaken the invader he uses various drugs like sulphonamides, antibiotics, worm-killers and fungus-killers.

What, however, is most disconcerting about allopathic therapy is the discomfort that generally accompanies it, particularly when used in treating sensitive systems like those of advanced *Sadhakas* on the spiritual path. It will be interesting to try to understand why this is so. Unlike the natural foodstuffs, most drugs are not congruent with the normal body structure. Even if they are basically natural body-constituents, in the process of synthesis into pill, liquid or injection form, certain artificial ingredients are added. That is why the body in whole or in part often reacts adversely to an administered drug. Let us now try to understand some of these adverse effects:

1. Irritation of the lining of the walls of the stomach or intestines may produce nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea.

2. The drug may contain some indigestible element or it may depress the secretion of the digestive enzymes, leading to dyspepsia, loss of appetite, flatulence, heart-burn or biliousness with giddiness and headache.

3. Depression of the normal peristalsis may lead to constipation.

4. The B-complex group of Vitamins is synthesized in the body by certain harmless germs residing in the intestines. Some drugs used for killing harmful germs may also kill these germs leading to B-complex deficiency. In B-complex deficiency, there may be burning of the tongue, ulcers in the mouth, dyspepsia, loss of appetite, tingling and numbness or burning sensation of hands and feet.

5. In a like manner, some drugs used for killing certain germs may also damage particular cells of the body. Quinine and Streptomycin used in Malaria and Tuberculosis respectively hurt the hearing apparatus. Arsenic and mercury used in syphilis and oedema can damage the kidney. Pain-relievers may erode the stomach lining or depress the bone marrow giving rise to hyperacidity and anaemia.

6. Drugs used to relieve colicky pains act by depressing the parasympathetic nerves which also ensure normal salivary secretion. They therefore in addition depress this salivary secretion giving a sensation of intense thirst and dryness of the mouth.

7. In allergic individuals drugs may bring on skin rashes or precipitate asthmatic attacks by themselves acting like allergens.

8. Incomplete administration of the drug in under-dosage or at too long intervals or for too short a period may damage the germ without killing it. This damaged germ becomes resistant to that particular drug. It multiplies producing a new resistant strain which infects many other people and does not succumb to treatment. Alternatively, such incomplete treatment may only suppress the disease. The illness thus lingers on and on, revealing itself at the slightest opportunity without being completely eradicated.

(To be continued)

KANDAR ANUBHUTI
(GOD-EXPERIENCE)
of
SAINT ARUNAGIRINATHAR
By Sri N.V. Karthikeyan

A Deep Study and a Standard Exposition of the processes of Spiritual Practice, its Psychology, and Philosophy, on the basis of the great work, the *Kandar Anubhuti*,—A Tamil work of 51 verses,—Text, Translation and Commentary.

In the Introductory pages of the Book are included a Research-study of the 'Life of the Saint' and 'The Need for an Esoteric Significance in the Kandar Anubhuti', which are also published as a separate booklet (pages 120; Price Rs. 1.50).

Pages: CXLIV + 554 Size: Crown 8vo Price: Rs. 8|-

News and Reports

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SRI KRISHNA JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

The life and message of Bhagavan Sri Krishna to the people of Bharatavarsha and to humanity as a whole may be said to have not been as yet properly understood. This great Superman, who is the towering figure of the stupendous biographical narrative bequeathed to man by the equally great Sri Krishnadvaipayana-Vyasa, stands as a shining star at the apex of the triangle at the ends of whose base are the world and the individual. In the life of Sri Krishna we have been given the ideal towards which life's process is moving. There is an ascent from inanimate matter to vegetable life, from the life of plants to the animal, from the animal to man and from man to the Superman. While man has ascended through the scales of the mineral, biological and instinctive levels of life in his intellectual and rational level of individuality, he has to ascend at least two more steps which are graduated by several stages. While the urges of hunger and thirst, sex and sleep overpower the vital and instinctive stages, man is predominantly egoistic without however completely transcending the sway of these lower instincts. He is perhaps as much subject to them as the sub-human beings, but is specially characterised by an endowment called discrimination, which can separate the good from the bad and analyse the principles distinguishing the true from the false. However, this discrimination remains merely a legal and conceptual guide-line and restriction upon his personal conduct, he having not actually *realised* the great *Fact* which is responsible for and is the reason behind this distinction made in the life of morality and understanding. This explains why man's life is predominantly a rule of regulative principles, of *do's* and *don't's*, a life of an outward morality and ethical mandate,—all because his knowledge of the true and the false is only a theoretical conviction rather than a practical experience. Human life is thus a mixture of conflict on one side and aspiration on the other.

The stage next to that of man is of the Superman who transcends the conventional morality of outward compulsion and convention and enters into an inward realm of a higher integrating law of ethics which is cosmical in its sweep, while human morality is chiefly a restraining rod preventing the expression of what he would usually call his freedom. The perception of the Superman is a direct insight into Truth, and not merely a rational discrimination between the real and the unreal. In the personality of the Superman are focussed the energies of the cosmos, as the all-pervading rays of the sun may be concentrated through a lens. The Superman is the meeting point of the Absolute and the relative.

The life of Sri Krishna is a thrilling biography of a great example of the Divine Superman through whose personality one can have a peep into the structure of the whole universe,—*Visvarupa*. Such a mighty hero is naturally a great centre of perfection,—a blend of wisdom, power, love, and action. With this equipment of universal might, Sri Krishna is before us as an ideal to emulate in every field of life,—as one who hails, perhaps, as the first statesman and politician of Bharatavarsha who tried to create an *Akhanda-Bharata* or a single India, under one rule, by putting down all forces of disintegration; as one who towered high with the highest knowledge of the here and the hereafter and saw things as, in broad daylight, though they may range beyond the perception of human faculties; as a person of an integrated psychological constitution wherein one cannot distinguish between intellect, emotion and will, they all working as a single power; as a veritable representation of God in the form of man.

The celebration of the birth of Sri Krishna is, to India that is Bharatavarsha, an annual occasion to rouse its soul to its universal reaches which is the goal of life, and to the world at large an opportunity to have a memory every year of the perfections that are to ensoul and give meaning to the various pursuits of human life.

On the 31st of August this year, Sri Krishna Jayanti was celebrated at the Headquarters of the Divine Life Society, with group prayers, Sankirtan of *Dvadasakshara-Mantra* of Sri Krishna, discourses on his life and teachings and an elaborate programme of worship in the temple commencing from the time of Sun-set to midnight, the holy hour of the divine advent.

EIGHTYFIFTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF GURUDEV SRI SWAMI SIVANANDAJI MAHARAJ

The 8th of September was solemnly observed as the sacred 85th Birthday anniversary of Sri Gurudev. The programme commenced with prayer and group meditation in the early morning, *Paduka-Puja* at the sacred Samadhi Shrine, and discourses, and concluded in the night with Satsanga consisting of Sankirtan and Bhajan, etc. Speakers on the occasion brought home to the minds of persons the significance of the mission of Sri Gurudev, which was to awaken man from the slumber of materialism, atheism, agnosticism and the like to make him come to an awareness of the existence of a higher life. His teaching was coupled with his own personal life and his gospel is really an expression of his own life. He insisted that there should be a harmony in the growth of the human personality from all sides and there should not be any sort of lop-sided development. It is an erroneous one-sidedness of emphasis that has made most people in the world traumatised neurotics, psychopathic patients, anti-social elements and harbingers of violence to the brotherhood of man. The illness of man is rooted within him. He is sick inside, and as long as this internal malady persists he cannot be made happy. Economic progress, industrial advancement and military powers cannot make one happy, for these are only attempts to stitch into a single fabric a tattered garment torn to shreds, which can never have the substantiality of a whole. There should be a beautiful system of education which makes man grow like a strong tree, which does not grow merely in parts, so that his understanding, emotion, volition and activity are a harmonious manifestation of his *true being* and not a dissipated outburst of his uncontrolled urges. The eternal, the relative and the individual have to be recognised in their proper places. 'God first, the world next, and yourself last', was a famous saying of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Here is for us an entire scripture in a few words.

FIFTYSEVENTH BIRTHDAY OF SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ

The 57th Birthday of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President of the Divine Life Society, was celebrated at the Headquarters-Ashram on the 24th of September. The members of the Ashram as well as devotees and guests who had come for the function assembled in the Bhajan Hall at *Brahmamuhurta* for a group prayer. After the round of chants,—Guru-Stotra, Shanti-Patha, recitation from the Bhagavadgita etc., everyone joined in chorus at *Mahamrityunjaya Japa* for the peace of the world and for the health and long life of the Swamiji. In the forenoon, Sri Swamiji performed individual worship, personally, at the Ashram's Sri Visvanath Mandir, Sri Guru Mandir, Sri Divya Nama Mandir, and the Samadhisthana of Sri Gurudev. A *Yajna* (Ayushyahoma) was performed in the *Yajna-Shala* to the recitation of Veda-Mantras, with the traditional invocation and ritual. Simultaneously, devotees and inmates of the Ashram performed the sacred Paduka-Puja at the Samadhi Shrine. This was done inside the actual Shrine, with Abhisheka, Archana, etc., as well as outside in the *Pandal,* where worship was performed to the holy Padukas of Sri Gurudev. On the conclusion of the worship and distribution of sacred *Prasad* a poor-feeding was arranged at the leper colonies at the local Dhalwala, Lakshman Jhula and in Brahmapuri. The Dhalwala colony feeding was personally attended by Sri Swami Chidanandaji. Every patient fed was also given a *Dakshina,* all which was graced with prayers to the Almighty.

The evening session of the day's programme was devoted to discourses, in which speakers dilated upon the good life and the good work of the Swamiji and prayed for his health, long life and all-round prosperity. At sun-set, Mother Ganga was worshipped with flowers, paper-boats lit with lamps and *Archana* and *Arati*. The night's programme which extended from 8 p.m. till 1.30 a.m. (of the 25th instant) consisted of musical performance, Sankirtan and three plays enacted by the *Sevaks* of the Ashram and the students of the local school on the themes, *'Matri-Pitri Bhakti'*, *'Guru Bhakti'*, and a 'scene from the Ramayana'. All those who participated in the dramas were awarded prizes by the Swamiji at the close of the function. The celebration concluded with *Mangala-Arati* and prayers for the peace of the world.

On the occasion of this Birthday of Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the Ashram released a special message of life to mankind, in the form of a sizable booklet, as well as another pocket-book in Hindi, known as 'Chidananda Chandrika'. His special message on the occasion given in English was also brought out in the form of a folder in Hindi. All this literature was printed and published for free distribution to seekers and devotees everywhere.

In his personal message to devotees, seekers and to the world, Sri Swamiji Maharaj gave in quintessence the philosophy of his own personal life, which would well fit into the good and an enlightened life of any aspiring soul, who would love to emulate his example. It needs no reiteration that the life of Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj has been, right from his early days, one of severe personal austerity, unmixed goodness and kindness of heart, and a general charitableness of approach in everything. His message, thus, embodied what he lived and continues to live. The life of man is to be adorned with honesty of purpose, holiness of motive, discipline of character and conduct, obedience to the higher divine laws, and a kind and merciful feeling towards other living beings,—all to be enlivened and vitalised by an intense aspiration for God-realisation. This wonderful message Sri Swamiji gave in his elaborate speech which he delivered thrice during the day at different gatherings. Readers are advised to study meticulously his very inspiring message published by the Divine Life Society on the occasion.

Birthday Poem Dedicated by a Devotee:

CHIDANANDAM

Light distilled in the mist oe'r Ganga
Pushed up a shadow sine-a-qua (at Sandhya)
Sans Scoure exists shadow?
Can a shadow hold light?
This one I saw sure did.
Do shadows have substance?
This one had for instance.
Depth, Light and breadth of dimension
How come! It's familiar! Illusion?
Blessed it is illusion or hallucination—
Ascending heights it grew—the Shadow.
A strange telescoping of the past in the present.
It spoke the words of old,
Gurudev's world designed bold,
Oddly new—the voice! It's the Shadow's
Nay! Not a shadow this! This glowing form!
Fresh from the lap of Mother Ganga Holy—

Like flames of sacred 'Havan' rising slowly.
The vigour of youth in thought and deed.
This is no shadow but 'Youth' indeed
What a meta-mor-pho-sis!
From youth the old man unforeseen—
This is no shadow, but reflection
Of the Guruvayur Krishna
In Gurudev's Grace, His own Shadow Sat-
Chit-Ananda. "Ala-Mast",
Hail Chidananda! Blessed most.
Thou 'rt the very shadow of the Gurudev
Deeply humble and in all his very *Bhav,*
Spare us your shadow, Swamiji!
But for another hundred years!
To bless and be blessed with *Tushti, Pushti* and
Divine *Aishwarya.*

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Balangir (Orissa): The Branch observed Sri Gurupurnima, Sadhana-Week and the Ninth Punyatithi Aradhana from 26th July to 3rd August 1972 with Brahmamuhurta Prayer, meditation and Japa in the morning and discourses in the evening by Sri Sadashib Ratha Sharma and Sri Chaitanya Charan Das on 'Omkara Tattva' and 'Bhakti Yoga and Guru Tattva', respectively, on different days of the week.

Bangalore (Nilasandra) (Mysore): The Branch celebrated the 9th Punyatithi Aradhana of Sri Gurudev on 3rd August, 1972. After the invocation and Bhajan, the President of the Branch Sri M. Venkataswamy Gowda gave a short discourse on the significance of observing Maha Samadhi Day and laid emphasis on the need to practise the teachings of Sri Gurudev in thought, word and deed.

At the conclusion of the function Sri Swami Achalananda Sarasvati of the Sri Swami Vivekananda Ashram, Ulsoor, Bangalore, who presided over the function on special invitation, spoke upon the relationship between the disciple and the Guru with reference to devotion, Bhakti and faithfulness. He stressed that Bhajan, Bhakti and disciplined Sadhana are very essential for the realisation of God.

The function came to a close with distribution of Prasad.

Baroda (Gujerat): Sri Guru-Purnima and holy Aradhana celebrations were held by the Branch on July 26 and August 3, respectively. In the month of August, the Branch conducted its weekly Satsangas on every Tuesday as usual, and one public gathering on the last Sunday of the month. The Branch celebrated the sacred Sri Krishna-Janmashtami in which Sri Balakrishna Shastri Pathak gave a lucid discourse on the life of Lord Krishna. He impressed upon the audience to try to inculcate one of the 39 virtues enumerated in the Bhagavadgita. The Branch decided to hold Executive committee meeting every fortnight at each member's house in turn, followed by a small Satsanga for the benefit of the people of that particular locality. During these meetings assessment of the work done during the preceding 15 days and programme for the next fortnight are chalked out.

Bhanjanagar (Orissa): The Branch observed Sri Gurupurnima and the 9th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Sri Gurudev on the 26th July and 3rd Aug., respectively, with similar programmes such as Havan, Archana to Sri Gurudev and discourses on the life and teachings of H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, by Sri Hare Krishna Tripathy, M.A., Pandit Sri Satyabadi Mishra, Sri D.S. Choudhury and others. In between these two important functions, the Branch conducted a Sadhana-Week, wherein different speakers including the Sadhakas who participated in the training spoke on various aspects of Sadhana

Bhawanipatna (Orissa): The sacred occasion of Sri Guru Purnima was observed by this Branch on 26th July, 1972 with morning and evening programmes. In the Brahmamuhurta session (from

4.30 a.m. to 6.30 a.m.) Vedic Prayer, Gita recitation and Guru-stotras were chanted, followed by meditation class. At about 7 a.m. Guru-Paduka-Puja was performed. The most sublime lecture delivered by Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj on the topic "Practical Sadhana" during the Sadhana-Week 1971 was read out and explained to the assembled Sadhakas. The evening Satsanga was conducted with inspiring Bhajans in a devotional and enthusiastic manner dedicated to Sri Guru Bhagawan.

The 9th Punyatithi Aradhana Day of Sri Gurudev was observed on 3rd August, 1972 almost similar to the Gurupurnima celebration.

Besides the above special Satsangas, *Arati* was held during the period from 27.7.72 to 2.8.72. The sacred Sri Krishna-Jayanti was celebrated on the 31st of August.

Bellary-Ladies (Mysore): The 9th Punyatithi Anniversary Day of Sri Gurudev was celebrated by the Branch from 26th July to 3rd August, 1972 with Satsanga and Gurupuja held at the residence of different devotees. On the Aradhana Day Smt. Vattam Parimalamma conducted Sankirtan and Bhajan in the evening. Fruits and biscuits were distributed among the patients of the Government Hospital.

Bhopal (M.P.): Sri Krishna Jayanti was celebrated at the residence of Sri Bhimandas Wadhwani, one of the active members of the Branch. Sri Krishna's marble *Murti* was well decorated with clothes, flowers and electric lights. Bhajan and Kirtan was started at 8 p.m. followed by the reading of the sacred scripture, Srimad-Bhagavadgita. At the time of the advent of Lord Sri Krishna, there was a special Archana and Arati. The function concluded with the distribution of holy Prasad.

The Branch celebrated the 85th Birthday Anniversary of Gurudev on a grand scale. In the morning, Gurudev's photo was decorated with flowers and special worship was performed after reading the Srimad Bhagavadgita and Ramayana in the residence of the Branch Secretary. The night Satsanga as well as public function was celebrated at the residence of the Branch President. The programme consisted of Bhajan, Kirtan, discourses on the life and teachings of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and distribution of free literature. The Satsanga was attended by the high-ranking officers of the Government of Madhya Pradesh, as Sri M.V. Godbole, I.A.S., Commissioner for Intelligence.

The Bairagarh, Bhopal and T.T. Nagar Branches conducted the Sri Guru-Purnima and Mahasamadhi Aradhana functions in a grand scale on July 26 and August 3, respectively.

Bikaner (Rajasthan): Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President from the Headquarters, accompanied by Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj, Secretary, and some Brahmacharins from the Headquarters, in fulfilment of the long-awaited desire of the devotees of the town, particularly of Dr. Swaran Lata Agarwal, paid a two days' visit to the Branch on the 6th and 7th May, 1972. Sri Swamiji was received at the Railway Station by the devotees. The programme of carrying the Divine Life Message to every nook and corner of the city started, from the station itself, where Swamiji offered prayers and did Kirtan to the delight of the audience present there. Swamiji in spite of his indisposed health had a busy programme. During his stay he visited a number of inspiring places and institutions, such as the Medical College, Ram Krishan Kutir, Agrasen Bhawan, Satsangamandal Public Park and Jain Parishad Mandal and gave talks on the spirit of service, 'Aim of Life', 'Life of Sri Gurudev', 'Regular Prayer and Meditation', 'Unity of Religions', 'Role of Ahimsa', etc. Paduka Puja was performed at the house of Prof. R.R. Agarwal. In addition to the above programme he attened a Teachers' Conference wherein Swamiji spoke on Secularism and Education.

Bhongir (Orissa): The Branch celebrated Sri Gurupurnima on 26.7.72 in a befitting manner.

spoke on the life and services of Maharshi Vyasa, H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, and concluded his speech with emphasis on the glory of Jnana Yoga. Taking advantage of the presence of the learned Swami Atmanandaji, the Branch organised two meetings,—one at the local Commerce College on 27.7.72 and another at the Town Hall on 28.7.72,—wherein he spoke on 'Bhakti Yoga' and on the 'Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Sri Swami Vivekananda', respectively.

Rajahmundry (A.P.): The Branch continues to conduct its usual Satsanga on every Friday.

Rourkela (Orissa): During the month of August, 1972 the Branch conducted its usual Satsanga on every Sunday, in the evening, at the residence of different members. A Study Circle has been formed at Q. No. B|156, Sector 6, wherein the members met on every Sunday morning.

OVERSEAS BRANCHES

Koln-Porz (Germany): During the month of August, 1972 the Branch conducted 3 Satsangas. It also brought out leaflets entitled "Yoga in Daily Life" by Sri Leslie Shepard, London, for free distribution.

Mauritius: The Branch conducted its regular Satsangas, Classes and other activities as usual.

Sri Swami Tattwabodhanandaji of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission visited the Ashram on Sri Gurupurnima Day and delivered a discourse on the "Significance of Sri Gurupurnima and the importance of a Guru in Spiritual life."

San Francisco (U.S.A.): The Branch continues to impart Yoga by correspondence, lending of books and distribution of free literature.

GRATEFUL THANKS

Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, President, expresses heartfelt, grateful thanks to all devotees of Sri Gurudev, to friends and well-wishers within India as well as abroad, who have sent him Birthday Greetings, Felicitations and Good-Wishes on his 57th Birthday celebration on 24th September, 1972. As Sri Swami Chidanandaji returned from Southern Tour only two days before his Birthday and had to leave on tour again on 26th September, it has not been possible for him to write to you all individually and to thank you for your kind remembrance and gracious greetings. Hence, he does show his gratitude here through this issue of 'The Divine Life' Magazine.

Sri Swamiji declared during the occasion of Birthday, "It gives me joy to receive these tokens of the affection and genuine good-will of so many noble souls. I deeply appreciate this gesture on their part. I earnestly pray to the Lord to shower upon these good friends His abundant divine grace and grant them all joy, peace and illumination. May Gurudev Sri Swami Sivananda's choicest blessings be upon them all!" He wished that these sincere feelings of his may be conveyed to one and all of you. It is in accordance with this wish of Sri Swami Chidanandaji that we have inserted this thankful and grateful acknowledgement.

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY.

(Continued from cover II)

in 1932. [illegible]ultaneously, the study of Srimad Bhagavad-Gi[illegible]hagavata and Krishna-Bhakti claimed his heart. He was a votary of Lord Narayana of the renowned shrine, Guruvayur. He first came to know of Sri Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, in the year 1932, through the latter's spiritual teachings in the columns of the *'My Magazine of India.'* Mysteriously enough, in the very next year (1933) a great devotee of Lord Krishna of Guruvayur advised the young Bhakta, Vaidyanathan, to go to Rishikesh and to meet Sri Swami Sivananda there. "Rishikesh is the best place for *Sadhana*", said this great devotee. In the year 1938 the opportunity presented itself while he was living with his elder brother who was at Kharagpur at that time as a Railway Officer. The earnest young seeker reached Ananda Kutir, on the banks of the Ganga, on the 4th January, 1938. Recognizing his spiritual worth, Sri Gurudev initiated him into the holy order of *Brahmacharya* on 20th January 1938, and gave him the *Diksha Name,* Narayan Chaitanya. Perceiving his holiness and purity, Gurudev allowed him the privilege of doing personal service to him. He entrusted Sri Narayanji with important work connected with *Jnana-Yajna.*

Gurudev gave him the important work of typing of the hand-written manuscript of his spiritual writings. Sri Narayanji thus became filled with the teachings of Gurudev's thrilling spiritual *Upadesa.* He also undertook the work of editing these manuscripts and getting them printed at Lahore or Calcutta, correcting the proofs and supervising the entire publishing work. He was unsparing in his dedicated labour in service of Guru Maharaj. And to all acts of service he gave a spiritual touch. It was combined with prayer and the attitude of worship. All work was sacred to him. *He did such worshipful work with absolute selflessness but at the same time with the keenest interest.* Swami Narayanji always insisted that Nishkama-Karma Yoga and Seva meant selfless service, not without interest, but with keen interest, earnestness and genuine sincerity. He faced great danger and even the risk of death during the Hindu Muslim riot in 1946-47 when he was in Lahore supervising the intense publication work at the Mercantile Press there. With city in flames all around him and with violence and murder let loose everywhere, he stuck to his duty and by miracle he managed to bring away safely valuable spiritual books of Gurudev. He renounced even the blessings of Gurudev's company and the holy Ganga to go and stay at the General Printing Works at Calcutta to repri numerous precious out-of-print works of Gur Maharaj. On his 40th Birthday, he took Sannyasa (on 16th September 1954), when Gurudev initiated him into the holy Monastic Order.

After Gurudev's passing in 1963, Sri Swami Narayanji Maharaj felt more and more an intense desire for a life of solitude and inwardness. Thus, in 1965, he went to Naimisharanya and thence to Varanasi. The spiritual attraction of this sacred city of Lord Vishvanath captivated him and he took up residence in a simple little room in the Kedareshwar Temple. He lived a life of intense spiritual quest and *Tapasya.* He was greatly revered and loved by all who came to know hi[illegible]e shunned publicity. Since 1970, an unsuspected [illegible]vous and heart condition manifested itself and told upon his health. Our Revered Gurubhai Sri Swami Nijabodhji Maharaj of Varanasi, as also Dr. S. Nathji, a great devotee of the place, were both of constant immense help and service to Sri Swami Narayanji Maharaj throughout. He gradually became confined to his room and his immediate neighbourhood. But his inner spiritual consciousness and serenity was never affected by the physical ailment. He kept up his supreme spirit of *Vedanta* unto the very last. He was to me a great source of spiritual inspiration at all times. I bow in homage to his sacred memory. May his blessings be upon us all.

—Swami Chidananda

25th September, 1972.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love!
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Satchidananda.
Thou art Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient.
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.
Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptations and to control the mind.

Free us from egoism, lust, greed, anger and hatred.
Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms
Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms
Let us ever remember Thee.
Let us ever sing Thy glories.
Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.
Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

—*Swami Sivananda*

CONTENTS

			Pages
1.	The Significance of Devi Worship	—H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda	386
2.	The Path of Devotion	—Sri Swami Chidananda	389
3.	The Universal Prayer of Gurudev Swami Sivananda	—Swami Tejomayananda	392
4.	Yoga for Spiritual Progress	—Sri Swami Manuvaryaji	396
5.	The Place of Yoga in Modern Society	—Dr. K.S. Joshi	401
6.	Festivals: Their Intrinsic Value and Significance	—Sri K. Thiagarajan	403
7.	Remember	—Sri N.S.V. Row	405
8.	Charity and Divine Life	—Dr. C.S. Venkateswaran	408
9.	What is Religion?	—Col. T.B. Pahlajani	410
10.	The Principles of Allopathic Action	—Dr. Aruna	415
11	News and Reports		417

SKANDA SHASHTHI FESTIVAL

The sacred Skanda Shashthi Festival or the six-day worship of Lord Subrahmanya wil be celebrated, as during the past years, at the Sivanandashram from 6th to 12th November, 1972. There will be special daily worship of the Lord, installed at the Bhajan Hall of the Ashram, with *Abhisheka, Archana,* floral decoration, etc. There will also be the daily reading of scriptures glorifying the Lord. On the last day, which is the glorious consummation of the function, worship will be conducted on a grand scale, to the chanting of Vedic hymns, Bhajans, Kirtans, etc.

Devotees are cordially invited to participate in the holy Puja, duly intimating us in advance. May the grace of Lord Skanda be upon you all!

General Secretary,
THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY.

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY SWAMI KRISHNANANDA FOR THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY,
SHIVANANDANAGAR, AND PRINTED BY HIM AT THE YOGA-VEDANTA FOREST ACADEMY
PRESS, P.O. SHIVANANDANAGAR, U.P., INDIA.